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BY

MAUD POWER

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

F. F. GORDON

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INTRODUCTION

THE annihilation of geographical distance is the wonder of the age. Our grandfathers did the "grand tour" round the Continental cities, none of which were more than five hundred miles from London. They returned home full of wondrous stories of peril and adventure by sea and land. Our fathers, still more venturesome, went as far afield as Cairo and the Nile, and sought sunshine and diversion during the winter months. Their sons have turned the mystic Coral Strand of India into a winter playground, and search for rest and diversion seven thousand miles from home. And, alas, for the "good old times!" the adventures which beset the modern voyager do not amount to sufficient *mal de mer* to occasion the loss of a couple of meals. The magnificent argosies which run between London and Bombay, the Gate of India, have put an end to the terrors of a long sea voyage, and the scene of artistic satisfaction which may be had from a journey to what is politically known as "The Middle East" is well

exemplified in the winter visit of the lady who has given to the public these pen and pencil sketches of India's unrivalled interest and scenic charms. Unattended and with no more concern than is entailed in a journey to the next county, she ventured East, as many others have done, and discovered that there is not necessarily an uncomfortable moment in a few months' tour. Nor is there need for an indulgence in that marvel of miscalculation, the "Indian outfit." Mr. Labouchere told recently a charming story connected with the life of the immortal painter Whistler. The great artist married Mrs. Goodwin. She was met by the teller of the story just before her wedding, and was asked what she was carrying in a small parcel dangling from a finger. "My wedding trousseau," she replied, "a new tooth-brush." Had she added to her burden a sola topee and a white umbrella, Mrs. Whistler would have accomplished all that is necessary in the way of special preparation for a cold-weather trip in India. The author who has given us this account of her journey, illustrated by her own paintings, found space in her luggage for her box of water-colours and a sketch-book, and the use she has made of them is shown in the selection of pictures this work contains.

I had the pleasure of seeing the originals, and was struck with their beauty, and the fidelity with which Indian scenes had been depicted.

Familiar as I am by long sojourn in the "Land of Regrets," I could not help admiring and appreciating the faithful conception of a country of endless and infinitely varied charm. Truth of colouring, the spirit of the landscape, purity of light peculiar to sunny skies, are caught in every case and portray India as it really is.

If the delight in contemplating these pictures and reading of the endless interest inspires in only a few the ambition to journey to the East between the months of November and March, and to visit the scenes from which these sketches are made, Miss Power's work will bear good fruit, for it will spread knowledge of a great land and a good people. The artist has paid the country a lofty tribute in conveying, as only the brush can, some of the most charming of its varied aspects. And the sons of this picturesque soil are no less delightful to look upon. Their radiant garments bejewel the landscape; their natural grace, and, to us, quaint and curious customs, add the final touch of life to the picture. Nor must we, or can we,

forget their sacred notions of hospitality and courtesy to the stranger. These neither pen nor brush can convey; personal contact alone makes us realise the true worth of their character. In all that is best the Indian is the Irishman of the East.

With this book in hand, no one could wish for a more delightful experience than to search out and identify the scenes so faithfully and artistically depicted and described by Miss Power.

F. F. GORDON,
Editor of *The Advocate of India.*

WAYSIDE INDIA

CHAPTER I

THE VOYAGE OUT

I CROSSED over from Ireland at the close of October with a lively theatrical company, and having sent my heavy luggage from Paddington to the P. & O. Co.'s office in Craven Street, I paid dock dues, &c., received my baggage receipt, and saw no more of most of my property until it was plumped down by picturesque coolies in my bedroom at the Great Western Hotel, Bombay.

An aunt and cousin came over from Ireland to see me off. We all stopped at the Charing Cross Hotel. During the whole of our short stay in London it blew, rained, and blew again. I felt like a prisoner going to execution, and each night as I listened to the wind, I looked forward with dread to the 3rd November, which was to be my sailing day.

The day we left England the weather took a turn for

the better, and the Thames looked lovely as we steamed across it to the *Mooltan*.

The crowd on board was immense. Many had come only to say good-bye to friends and relatives probably leaving England for years, and I felt somewhat of a fraud when I reflected that I was travelling simply for my pleasure.

Coffee and sandwiches were served in the saloon for passengers' friends, and all seemed to be hungry and excited: perhaps there is nothing so wearying as having to keep your eye on a quantity of small luggage.

At last the bell rang, a signal for non-passengers to leave the ship. Most of them crowded on board the tender in haste, as though they suspected the captain had designs of carrying them to sea against their wish.

The bugle-call for luncheon found me in my tiny cabin. It required management to open my press and trunk at the same time. Then the door of the berth kept hitting me on the head in an exasperating manner, making my task even more difficult. However, it was some comfort to have the place all to myself, it being a single cabin.

My first meal on board ship was a sumptuous one of many courses, and after it we chose our places at table, and kept them for the rest of the voyage. This is the

right of those who start from London, first come first served being the rule.

We had very pleasant people at our table, and for most of the trip we clung together and remembered each other ever afterwards. With companionship at meals for three weeks, how could it be otherwise?

On November 4th I did not even find dinner an enjoyable feast, for though calm for the "Bay," the ship underwent a series of movements like earthquakes. I began the day not wisely but too well, by having a delicious hot sea-water bath and no breakfast, but later in the day I struggled on deck, and after comparing notes with a passenger far more sick than myself, was able to make a good lunch and enter on the first of that friendship of years with the nice, merry people at our table.

During a few hours of comparatively calm weather, we all went down in turn to view the engine-room. I shall never forget the heat. I understand heat and I do not understand machinery. The iron stair-rails were so hot that we had to use mufflers of waste to keep them from burning us.

After sighting Cape Finisterre I attended dinner, but did not dress for the feast. The people who attempted to do so said "they no longer cared for anything to eat."

November 6th was fine and various. I sketched a bit, though there was a roll; indeed it got very rough about luncheon-time. I attended that meal from a sense of duty, but derived little pleasure from the act.

On November 7th, nearing "Gib," we had breakfast at eight so as to give us time to land, but the land and torrents of rain arrived together, so most of us stopped on board, and I saw "Gib" for the first time, veiled in an atmosphere which was a bit moist, as they say in Ireland.

Some Little Sisters of the Poor and some peddlers boarded us, and the buying of hideous post-cards and faded flowers served to while away the time.

The morning of the 8th of November was fine, and people began to throw off their depression. A shilling sweepstake on the ship's run was got up, and Bridge parties formed. One lady with a baby arranged that whoever happened to be dummy held the baby.

We heard that after taking on our overland passengers there were to be two dinners. Every one preferred the later meal. A gentleman who joined us at Marseilles told me he had been shut out of Paradise. I should not myself have felt quite so strongly as that on the subject of a six o'clock repast.

It was rough in the Gulf of Lyons, and we had the

"fiddles" on the table. Although necessary in bad weather, fiddles are awkward things to deal with, and in nowise heighten the enjoyment of a meal. Dining with a sea on has other drawbacks as well. For instance, it is nerve-shattering to observe the table-steward taking a run at you with a plate of hot soup; and then you marvel how he manages to deposit it in the right spot instead of pouring it down your back.

When I met any one clinging to the rails in the passage, politeness prompted me to give way and let him or her pass, but after relinquishing my support I generally lost my balance and lurched into my fellow-passenger, sometimes causing considerable damage.

Marseilles was reached on November 9th at one o'clock. The pilot came on board at once, but we were not alongside the quay until 5.30. It took some fearfully strong French language from the pilot's friends on board the tug to keep him up to his business.

We coaled. The windows and doors were closed, the carpets taken up, and curtains taken down. Happily the electric fans cooled the cabins.

After dinner we walked on shore, and took a five-franc drive into the town. Here, as it was quite dark and nothing to see, we all had a drink respectably at the

hotel. We tried to get the cabman to take us back on board for less than five francs. This he did on being presented with a cigar and many good reasons, in very bad French, why he should do so.

The 10th of November was a bright day, and the sun shone on a scene of hopeless confusion as the overland passengers arrived, and commenced tearing about looking for their luggage and cabins. Most of them said that words would ever fail to describe the misery of their train journey. The carriages rolled about like a ship in a choppy sea. They felt already deadly ill.

After leaving Marseilles it was beautifully calm. The butterflies began to appear; two handsome Parsee ladies in native dress, and a lovely Hindu gentleman in white satin embroidered with gold. The latter ate nothing but food prepared for him by his uncle. In the Red Sea his relative's dainties went bad and had to be thrown overboard. He nearly died of hunger, for the ship could supply him with nothing, except apples and nuts, which was not calculated to tamper with his salvation.

At the table some way beyond us sat two queer ladies from Dublin, neither old nor young. They quickly annexed a strange man, whether for life or only for the voyage we never discovered. A passenger whose cabin

porthole opened on deck complained to the purser that he could not sleep on account of all the lovey-dovey talk going on outside.

We passed between the islands of Sardinia and Corsica in the night. A little robin was blown on deck, and during the day about four pounds of bread lay scattered around for its consumption.

The clocks were put on an hour every night. People thus done out of their sleep took a doze on deck after luncheon. They presented a funny sight to the waking voyager.

A sports committee undertook to amuse us. A notice to that effect was hung near the companion.

We were taught how to throw little rounds of rope into buckets, or along the deck at marks. We were initiated into the mysteries of a Bridge tournament, and found with luck we could play that game for twelve hours out of the twenty-four. If musical you might join a party who spent the entire day practising for the concert, until the ship's passengers began to know the songs better than the singers.

However, if you happened to be really clever, there remained nothing for you to do but to take your brains with you and travel to the second class. There, if found

up to the mark, you might be allowed to join a company calling themselves "The Gordon Brothers." They displayed a talent which left the first saloon speechless with admiration and green with envy.

On Saturday night we passed the volcanic island of Stromboli. Burning lava was flowing down its side.

November 12th being Sunday, there was a Catholic service in the smoking-saloon at seven o'clock, and other services in different parts of the ship during the day.

Our table-steward amused us very much one morning. A bell was rung often and violently. "What a noise that man is making!" said we. "Oh!" corrected the boy, "that is a female ring. A female ring is long like this." Here he held his hands wide apart.

The wind rose on Sunday night, and on Monday there was a bad roll. Finding plenty of vacant chairs on deck, I did not trouble to find my own, but just dropped into the one nearest. Some brave spirits were having a music practice in the saloon, and every now and again, when the noise of the sea hushed a little, I could hear snatches of melody. All the ports were closed, and those who had no electric fans in their cabins found it hot.

There was a library on board, and for a small subscription one could procure a new book every day. I

shall always connect "The Garden of Allah" with my trip from Suez. It toned with my surroundings.

On the 14th of November we had a real bad, rolling dinner. We heard the smashing of china, and we had to hold on to our bottles.

Many of us had now grown accustomed to the motion, but of those who joined us at Marseilles few were to be seen on deck.

Slowly towards one o'clock we pulled into Port Said. The quaint, flat town was beautifully illuminated by a dimly shining sun. Boats surrounded us, and Cook's men looked particularly beautiful, being brilliantly dressed in red. Then the noise began. Coal barges came alongside, and picturesque bronze figures started to carry little baskets of coal on their heads. They swarmed up and down the gangways, jabbering and shouting, wearing the appearance of fiends bearing fuel for the nether regions.

We took in fresh water, and also a conjurer. The latter showed us some of his magic. Two pretty little live chickens helped him with his performance. His tricks were wonderful, though a trifle monotonous, and I think the female part of his audience would have preferred to feed the chickens.

On descending the gangway to land, we were offered

seven boats apiece. Our selecting only one created considerable sound and fury. On the payment of sixpence a head at a little office on shore we were at liberty to enjoy the pleasures of the town of Port Said.

We drank thick, Eastern coffee, sitting on chairs in the street, and were mobbed by peddlers—about six with each cup. I was christened Mrs. Langtry by a gentleman of extremely dark complexion, who informed me he was a Scotsman from Dublin. He had wonderful things for sale, and wanted five shillings for every sixpenny article. He tried to tempt me with spoons (capable of poisoning any cup of tea they might be employed to stir), snake bracelets, and walking-sticks containing an ink-pot, pen, and pencil, as though it were usual to carry about the means of signing one's will, &c. After much bargaining we loaded ourselves with rubbish; who can resist the pleasure of buying useless things? We walked down beautifully-coloured, very dirty, quaintly-peopled streets. Some of our passengers preferred to ride. They had their senses galloped out of them by screaming boys urging the animals on.

They accept every coin of the realm at Port Said, then mix it up and give you your change in anything that comes handy.

The quickly setting sun had quite vanished when we were ready to return to the ship. The men rowed races with each other on the way back, and seemed to enjoy it, which is more than I did. Yet the harbour was a wonderful sight, crowded with brilliantly-lighted ships. But what pleasure can be experienced by those a prey to wild fears of a watery grave?

The morning of the 15th dawned a beautiful day. As we began to get up steam, the *Isis* arrived with the Brindisi mail and passengers. They had had a fearful time—been more under water than over most of the way.

The Mooltanites did their best, as usual, to get in the way of the Lascars raising the gangway. This is a trick seafaring passengers soon acquire. They love to see the first and last of land. A British seaman would simply say, "Move out of that, please!" but a native sailor politely waits for the passengers to find out why he is waiting.

The boat and crew for tying us up in the Canal were hauled on board, and the pilot, captain, and chief officer paced the bridge as we slowly slipped along, the Desert on our left, and on the right Lake Meuzaleeh, shut out by banks overgrown with tall, feathery grass.

We tied up to let a pilgrim ship pass—it, according to marine law, having the right of way. (I don't understand the law myself.) This ship was crowded, indeed covered, with quaintly-dressed Eastern devotees, much as a lump of melting sugar becomes surrounded by all the flies of the locality.

We were shown the spot where the Canal had been blocked by a sunken ship. When she was about to be blown up, all fled in terror from their houses. Only one small window was broken, which proves that the unexpected mostly happens. As we passed, a large body of men were at work clearing away the odds and ends.

That November afternoon in the Canal was very beautiful, and the sunset a thing to remember in one's dreams.

A concert took place in the evening. The joke of the day was: Two Irish ladies of doubtful origin, to judge by appearances, were heard to inform the stewardess that they traced their descent from the Irish kings.

By this time I had made the acquaintance of a man who had worked himself into a quantity of money. His hair was never brushed, and his shirt was seldom clean. All his conversation began with a quotation from Tennyson.

SUEZ CANAL

A fading-away young married lady spent her day lying on a long deck-chair, drinking iced water. There were the usual quantity of young girls pretending to be amused, and great numbers of young men wandering about, trying to escape being bored.

The stewards are worked like galley-slaves. They are up at five, and not in bed before eleven; eat their meals standing, and have but one hour's rest during the day. The waiting is good. No confusion. A gong sounds at the end of every course. Each man at once joins the long line leaving the room, and returns in the same order by another door with the next dish.

We stole through the narrow waters of the Canal. From the bridge, the electric bell sounded continually. Our huge ship seemed a great deal too big for such a tiny channel. After dark, a searchlight was lowered on to a platform at our bows. Only for it, we should have been obliged to tie up for the night.

We passed a lonely Arab encampment in the silent desert. Men were grouped round their fire. Camels rested some way from the tent. Low, green bushes grew in patches over the sand. They resembled Irish furze. I suppose animals eat them. I tried to hear the voice that they say calls man away to the Sahara.

The fittings and partitions were taken away from many of the cabins on the spar-deck. This large space was to be used as an office by the native postal officials, who were to join us at Aden. All the mails were to be brought up from the hold and sorted for distribution before Bombay was reached.

"You are my viz-a-viz," said a gay young lady to a rough seaman opposite, by way of conversation.

"No I'm not," he answered; "I'm the chief engineer."

We had our newspaper on board. It was called the *Mooltan Times*, and, like its namesake the London *Times*, could be got for threepence. Here are the principal contents of a copy of this paper:—

The Mooltan Times

A JOURNAL OF PERSONAL INTEREST TO PASSENGERS ABOARD

Saturday, November 11, 1905. *At Sea.*

Entre Nous

The *Mooltan Times* will be published on board on Saturday next for the last time. Passengers who desire to have inserted in its columns any article, notice, short paragraph, &c., should send the same to the printer any time before Wednesday, 15th November.

The Ship and all about her

The *Mooltan* is a twin-screw steamer, built to the order of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, at a cost of about £300,000. The engines are 15,000 indicated horse-power of the quadruple-expansion type, capable of producing a speed of 19½ knots an hour. The shaftings—by which the engines propel the screw—are each 70 feet in length, each screw making ninety-two revolutions a minute, although weighing 12 tons. There are eight boilers with holding capacity of 30 tons of water each, and able to stand with ease a pressure of 220 lbs. to the square inch. When these are all empty, they turn the scale at 760 tons. For these eight boilers there are thirty-six fires, and kept constantly burning consume 130 tons of coal per day, and it requires the help of five motors to generate a forced draught. The ship's length from stem to stern is 520 feet, the breadth 58 feet, and the depth 38 feet. The main-mast measures from the top to the bottom 136 feet, and the fore-mast one foot less. The funnels are each 14 feet in diameter. The anchors on the forecastle weigh as follows: port anchor, 5 tons; starboard anchor, 5½ tons, and the spare anchor, 4½ tons.

For drinking purposes, 250 tons of fresh water is carried in tanks provided for the purpose, which are filled at several of the ports *en route*. Ballast is carried by way of 1200 tons of sea-water. There are engines constantly at work pumping in sea-water to be condensed (*i.e.* have the salt extracted from it) and used for the ship's boilers, to supply steam for the engines, &c.

In the coal-bunkers there is sufficient space to hold

2000 tons of coal. For passenger accommodation the ship is fitted with cabins on the main-deck, spar-deck, hurricane-deck, and boat-deck in the first saloon. In the second saloon only the main-deck has sleeping accommodation.

The ship is declared by the shipwright's surveyor to be able to accommodate 357 saloon passengers, 162 second saloon, and 363 crew, making a total of 882 souls.

A Chess Puzzle

The following little puzzle is guaranteed to while an hour or so away, when you have nothing better to occupy your time:—

Given one chess-board and one set of men, in how many different ways is it possible to set them up in readiness for a game? Remember that after you have set up an arrangement the two bishops, two knights, or two rooks may change places on either side; that there is a large number of possible permutations of the pawns, and so on. It is an interesting calculation, but it is not advisable to try to solve it just after losing a close game, as it will not then prove soothing to the nerves. Most people will, however, fail to find the right answer, for a little reason which I will explain in next Saturday's edition.

An American Nursery Rhyme

Lipton had a little yacht,
Her sails as white as snow,
And everywhere the *Shamrock* went
The wind refused to blow.

J. D.

GULF OF SUEZ

Random Notes

Since leaving Marseilles a sports committee has been co-opted. It is not our duty to criticise the grammar of the notices.

Port Said is still green in our memory, but not so green as the Arabs thought those who paid two shillings for a snake bracelet.

Coaling at Port Said

Of the striking sights in voyaging East, the filling of the ship's bunkers at the entrance of the Suez Canal is certainly remarkable. An endless chain of coolies run with their little loads from the lighters to the plank's end, from which the coal is tipped into the bunkers below. Although by such means the record of coaling a thousand tons in five hours is achieved, yet rarely is one of the small, shallow baskets carried by the Arabs filled with more than about thirty pounds, and only the great number of hands employed, running as close up together as possible, could accomplish such a feat in such a short space of time. Chanting of Allah, the coolies keep the pace. They have barely any clothing on, though occasionally a wearer of a soldier's old jacket, or a sailor's baggy trousers may be noticed.

The wonderful accomplishment displayed in the coaling of ships at Port Said may, in a measure, serve to show how the Pyramids and other wonderful works of construction in Egypt were reared with only the barest mechanism.

That the big battle-ships of Britain are coaled from the frail little basket of a poor, attenuated Arab, may

well come within the category of facts as being stranger than fiction.

Suez Canal

As we will soon be in the Suez Canal, a few details of it ought to be interesting.

In the first place, its length in round numbers is a hundred miles. Port Said is at one end and Suez at the other. For twenty-five miles the Canal makes its way through Lake Mezalah, and later on passes through the Bitter Lakes on its way to Suez. Owing to the shifting sand and the frequent sand-storms, the Canal would fill up in two years if dredgers were not almost continually at work. The largest dredger in the world is to be seen here.

Passing through the place, together with the coaling at Port Said, is reckoned by travellers to be the best sights on the trip to the East. The anniversary of the opening of the Suez Canal is on November 17th. It will have been opened thirty-six years on that date.

The *Mooltan* is expected to arrive safely at Port Said.

The Poet's Corner

MANY INVENTIONS

Starting away on the new P. & O.,
The passengers all cry out, "What Oh!"
The ship and its inmates spurn gaily along,
The ladies were bilious but tried to look strong.
The sea was so choppy, it made them feel bad,
And some were so green and some were so sad.
She travelled to India without her Papa,
Tra la la la la la la la la la.
The fishes all had such a jolly good time.
And so here's the end of this beastly old rhyme.

The poem "Many Inventions" is the combined effort of ten passengers, each of whom composed one line, knowing only the metre, subject, and, where necessary, the rhyming syllable of the preceding line.

Stop Press News

Any news arriving after we have gone to press, will not be found here.

Lord Curzon's Illness

(*From our Correspondent. Lahore, Saturday, November* 4.)

Owing to his illness, Lord Curzon has now entirely abandoned the programme of his intended tour, and his sole anxiety now is as to whether he will be sufficiently well to be at Bombay to meet the Prince and Princess of Wales. The doctors hope that the Viceroy will be able to leave Lahore to-morrow.

Editor, Printer, and Publisher:
T. Shepherd.

Thursday 16th was a beautiful morning as we slipped past the lovely shores of the Gulf of Suez.

The Hindu belonging to the Sulanamy Sadh caste is a startling example to us. He told me his ancestors were from the creation. He believed not in images; only in beginnings. We all take great interest in him on account of his beautiful white satin coat embroidered in gold.

A concert took place in the evening. A nice Eng-

lishman sang an Irish song. His "brogue" would have passed for Hindustani in Ireland.

It was a bit hot in the Red Sea, but by no means as hot as I had been led to expect. There was a breeze, which rose a slight sea. This upset many people who attempted to dance.

Friday the 17th was cool and rough; the wind blew always. The ship danced along on her course. Some people lunched on iced water.

Opportunity gave me courage to enter into conversation with the Parsee lady. Like all her race, she wears a becoming band of embroidered black velvet round her sari. She was a nice, gentle creature of days gone by. Her little son had lovely soft skin, deep dark eyes, and long eyelashes sweeping his cheeks. The men are generally most good-looking.

Our last day in the Red Sea was hot enough, as (on account of the head-wind) all the portholes had to be shut. We suffered a consuming thirst. A notice was posted up announcing that the port side of the ship had been set apart for ladies who wished to sleep in the open. Some tried it, but were uncomfortable, as their covering kept blowing away through the night, and at five in the morning they had to come below to their hot

cabins again, for the gentlemen generally go on the rampage in their dressing-gowns about this time. The sailors also wash decks at daylight, which alone would make early rising compulsory.

Shoals of flying-fish, disturbed by our progress through the water, rose under the steamer's bows like a covey of small birds, to disappear again in the water some distance from us.

We were late arriving at Aden, the head-wind having been both our friend and enemy, for although it was refreshing it had delayed the ship. Passengers thus missed their chance of seeing the wonderful tanks. It was pleasant to sail near land once more, even though the shores appear but sandy plains dotted with rocks resembling in shape the craters of some extinct volcanoes.

We dropped anchor about five o'clock. The sun was setting behind queer-pointed hills, and everything was beautiful in a weird, desolate way. The town consists of a few houses perched at the foot of rough rising ground. Boatloads of Arabs came off to us at once, the dying sunlight showing to advantage their splendidly-shaped bronze figures. They shouted, talked, and jumped about their great big crafts. Some of them, however, were dignified, and wore white wraps and red turbans.

The native post-office officials soon arrived. They did not interest me much, but their luggage was well worth an inspection. Queer little kettles, cooking-pans, chairs, antique boxes, capable of containing three handkerchiefs and two collars, peculiar drinking-vessels, and ornamental brass pots full of the bad butter they love so well.

On entering a port I always move forward to hear the sailor's cry as he throws the lead. Where did seamen first learn that weird, sorrowful cry, answered in the same strain by a man from the bridge, only the latter repeats it softly like an echo? Was it the scenes of danger past which ships slowly crept that taught them this solemn warning call?

It is amusing to observe the great, fat, important-looking quartermaster who orders about the picturesque native sailors. He shouts his commands very quietly and never swears. Perhaps that power has not been given to him in Hindustani.

While at Aden the Aga Khan dined on board at a table near us. He is the god mentioned by Mark Twain in "More Tramps Abroad." Very handsome, but resembling an Italian or Spaniard more than an Indian. He is a great sportsman, possessing many lovely Arab animals,

SUEZ

and it is an open secret that nobody could teach him anything about a horse. The faithful of his creed pay him well, but for a holy man, his appreciation of champagne astonished me. He sails to India in the next ship, meeting the Prince of Wales at Calcutta, where he hopes to have the honour of organising a sporting excursion through a hitherto unexplored bit of country.

There are three pretty girls on board. The envious have named them "The world, the flesh, and the devil." The devil fell ill, and had to spend her time flirting with the doctor.

In the Indian Ocean it was calm; a lovely breeze blew in our faces, and the ship limped along like a horse very much gone on the fore-leg. A fancy-dress ball took place about the 21st. One amusing man, dressed as a Turk, had been the refuge of the destitute. His harem of white-sheeted figures comprised many of both the male and female passengers. Two Eton boys were lifelike, and fat almost to the extent of bursting their clothes. The usual Lascar, table-steward, nurse, Welshwoman, Circassian, with many got up in odds and ends, made a motley crowd.

The 23rd of November being our last day on the *Mooltan*, we were given our custom-house papers to fill

in. One lady bringing over a setting of eggs, asked the saloon-steward how she ought to declare them.

"As chickens," answered the man, "for it is very hot in the hold."

People became romantic that evening on the ship. My greatest friend presented me with the menu of our last dinner. I insert it, as it was a treasure many people were dying to secure when too late.

P. & O. S.S. "MOOLTAN"

DINNER

Consommé Sévigné
Filets de Soles Mennière
Jambon Rôle
Pluviers d'Or
Asperges Vinaigrette
Chapon
Salade
Gâteau Russe
Pouding Glacé Pain Bis
Beignets de Fromage.
Dessert. Café.

Thursday, November 23, 1905.

As we approached the East I felt that years had elapsed since I left home. While packing in my cabin, thinking that if I sat long enough on my box I might,

perhaps, finally get it shut, friends of the voyage, whose homes were in the land of the sun, presented me with cards, invitations, and, best of all—a welcome.

Before we all parted after dinner, a member of council, who happened to be on board, proposed the captain's health, and returned thanks on behalf of the passengers for the attention he had paid to their comfort.

Owing to the absence of his superior (suffering from sore eyes), the chief officer returned thanks. He said: "They had done all they could for their most distinguished passengers. Of course, when it came to the Red Sea, and everybody wanted a cabin to themselves, they had been, unhappily, unable to accede to their request." He then proposed the ladies.

Our first-saloon funny-man then got up to speak. He was not equal to the second-saloon funny-man, but was as good as could be expected under the circumstances. He said: "I have been chosen by the ladies to return thanks for them. The only thing they complain of is the absence of proposals, but there still remains time to rectify this evil, as the port side of the deck would be reserved for that purpose until nine o'clock," &c. &c. It was amusing to watch the young men proposing to him on their way out.

CHAPTER II

BOMBAY

THE stewards were up all night, and the stewardesses began to call us at five. Seven o'clock breakfast was announced. However, I was only in time to see the bright beginnings of Bombay through the bath-room porthole.

Queerly rigged sailing-boats flitted round us, manned perhaps by descendants of the Kolis, the original inhabitants, who used the harbour as a fishing village. They built no temples; just worshipped a rock or two.

The ruins of Mahratta fortresses clung to queer-shaped hills, rosy in the sunlight. From these strongholds marauding bands at one time harassed Portugal's little wedding-present. In the old books on Bombay, one reads that in 1661 was signed the marriage-treaty between Charles II. and the Infanta of Portugal, whereby the port and island of Bombay, with all rights, profits, territories, and appurtenances whatsoever

thereunto belonging, were handed over to the King of Great Britain, his heirs and successors for ever.

There remain few traces of the Portuguese, if we except the churches. These are to be met with everywhere, and are largely supported by the natives, who at one time were persecuted into the faith.

I found our funny-man sitting on the stairs holding somebody's baby. He was not a bit funny then, being dreadfully nervous, fearing the child might cry. He handled the infant as though it had been a shape of jelly, so I came to his rescue and he fled.

A tender landed us at Ballard Pier. I was delighted to find her a large, safe boat. I never in my life ended a journey under more pleasant circumstances. I just entered the Great Western Hotel 'bus, and after a short drive found myself in the room engaged for me.

In 1771 this building had been Mr. Hornby's great house. It is in a narrow, busy street, and fronts the main gate of the Government dockyards.

Although it was the end of November, my sensations were those of July. On my balcony the sun shone and sparrows twittered. The Advertising Fiend has arrived in the East. When the carriage drew up

I found four paper fans recommending me to buy somebody's something.

I think Mark Twain gives a very good description of ordinary, everyday India. The crow—his crow—arrived, and perching outside on the rail, wondered if I meant to begin the day without Chhota Hazri. Every morning he returned, and to escape his abuse I divided my toast with him.

An officer, whom I met later, told me he had once shot a crow in his compound, but he never shot another. The way the bereaved relatives talked over the tragedy before his face made him quite ashamed of his conduct.

I had a nice large room, from which there was a pleasant view of the sea. Shall I describe the apartment, for which I paid nine rupees a day and no extras?

One side was composed of windows and balcony, plenty of grass blinds and venetian shutters; the rest was panelled and painted grey. The floor was covered with mosaic pavement, red ants, and very tiny bits of carpet, which were continually being swept away and lost. My bed consisted of one mattress and two sheets. The management of the bath-room next door was

undertaken by a black boy. He emptied the wooden tub by simply pulling a cork out of the bottom, the water being allowed to run about until it disappeared. Little red ants abounded. I found a glass of milk and some sweets swarming with them. I grew careful after this. The attendance seemed very Eastern. A native might call you, bring you hot water, and wait on you at dinner, but there was a chance he might do none of these things. It is almost necessary to have a servant, but I found it difficult to get one here who would be of use to me in the south, so I went without, trusting to luck and tips.

Since the arrival of the Prince of Wales everything had gone up in value. The dhobies (washermen) charged royal-visit prices, and they must have come to an end of their supply of soap, for my clothes returned from the laundry slightly dirtier than they went.

Towards evening the mosquitoes began to sing round my chair. I mended my mosquito-net, but I cannot say I liked sleeping under it. My sensations were the same as they had been at home while passing an afternoon in a stuffy bee-veil.

Next day I took a walk before breakfast, interspersed with notes of admiration. Graceful figures, bright blots

of colour, passed me. The little, sickly plants I remembered in the stovehouse at home, were growing wildly like weeds in the hedges. By the sea ran a huge field, or meadow, dotted with trees. Close by were fine public buildings in their own gardens, and lower down were rows of houses of every shape and size, hidden away behind a veil of brilliantly flowering creepers.

Soon after landing we dined out with friends, and sat on a huge verandah through a beautiful tropical night. We sang ballads with home-sick young men, our voices perhaps not quite equal to our sentiment. How one enjoys sometimes mixing with people quite unknown. Novelty is in itself a sort of happiness.

The day after this dinner our friends took us at dawn for a stormy trip round the harbour. I had such difficulty in keeping my hat from being blown away that I did not enjoy the splendid scenery as much as I otherwise might have done. I remember, however, the delight I felt at not being ill. Men were excavating for stone on Elephanta, where they have commenced building a fort to protect the harbour. We met a barge loaded down to the water's edge with hay, but her rudder having broken she came to anchor in the

ELEPHANTA ISLAND, BOMBAY

wind, the consequence being that her cargo kept flying away to sea. We passed it floating about for miles. They wanted us to give them a tow, but our host did not feel equal to the rescue. After two seas had broken over our launch, the captain ran between the islands for shelter, and here we enjoyed a meal of hot coffee and sandwiches.

I was impressed with the necessity of seeing Victoria Station before travelling care claimed my attention. It is a palace built of marble. Not a common palace, but a fairy palace. European travellers should not be allowed to enter, they spoil the effect; the brightly dressed natives, with their still brighter bundles and brass pots, alone seem in keeping with the place. The ticket-office should also be abolished.

About this time rain and thunderstorms made Bombay nice and cool, and I recall with pleasure the busy street in front of the hotel. I often sat in the deep porch and watched the strange new world go by. Strings of bullocks in their clumsy carts and harness, their drivers sitting low down holding them by their tails; trams full of natives to overflowing; the hands in the Government dockyards going to and from their work. All were interesting. Touring in the East is comfortable,

and strangers soon begin to lead a life of luxury. We drove, like the rest of Bombay, every evening. A comfortable carriage from the hotel cost three rupees, the coachman giving himself no end of airs on account of his white calico livery.

Victoria Gardens were beautifully laid out, and presented lovely vistas of colour, but we had some difficulty in getting our coachman to take us there. Many an evening our limited amount of Hindustani landed us down at the crowded Victoria dockyard, where, however, the pilgrims waiting to start for Mecca were a sight well worth driving far to see. Out along the side-walk they squatted, the rich under little mat shelters, cooking their food at tiny fires in the road, waiting patiently for days, sometimes weeks, until the health officer gives them a passport enabling them to sail away and save their souls.

In Victoria Gardens wild beasts lay sleeping away their days in cages half hidden by masses of flowering creepers. It was amusing to feed the animals, who were almost always hungry.

In the East none but Europeans and native princes seem well fed. The poor elephant hinted his hunger to me by putting his trunk up to his mouth.

Malabar Hill is another charming drive, and the breeze there blows new life into one after a breathlessly hot day.

Having snailed up the winding road, it is pleasant to leave the carriage at some point where a lovely view of Bombay can be had. The great town by the sea stretches away until it is lost in a purple haze, which in reality is the smoke of many factory chimneys, tinted and beautified by the setting sun. Banks of fern, bougainvillier, and hibiscus grew around. Beyond, in a tangle of palm-trees, perched the vultures waiting for the dead, for here, on an almost barren patch of land, stands the melancholy Tower of Silence. The Parsee fire-worshippers leave the bodies of their dead exposed on gratings until the many birds of prey remove the flesh from the bones. They are then dropped into a well below, where they become dust.

The Parsee practically owns Bombay. Most of the houses on Malabar Hill are his, and he possesses many other desirable things. But the English hold out against him at their clubs, and his millions can never make him a member. The Parsee women were never *purdah*, or enclosed. Once in times gone by, for this reason, two of them were insulted in the street. Thereupon these

two women threw themselves off the Rajabai Tower into the roadway. This act appealed to the Eastern understanding, and they thus secured their sisters' freedom.

Parsee women drive about with their husbands. They have generally two servants in fancy costume on the box, a man standing up behind, and another attendant running round with a feather fan keeping the flies from bothering the horses. Mounted policemen are dotted about to keep order. They are beautiful-looking creatures, but eventually die of their own loveliness, as, running into debt to keep up appearances, they finally get dismissed the service.

In India the man whose business it is to lay the dust in the street takes his time about it. He strolls round with a water-skin under his arm, squirting the liquid about the road by squeezing the bag with his hand.

Trees are seldom cut down here; they are valuable. If a verandah or a house gets in the way of a palm, the verandah or house has to give in, and not the tree.

At sunset one sees many groups of Mohammedans facing Mecca, and praying vigorously. They are picturesque, and also picturesque are the carriage-loads of Hindu fathers surrounded by little, grave children in queer-shaped garments and gold embroidery. The colour-

ing, sights, and breezes of those evening drives will remain to me always a pleasing memory.

One Friday, friends invited me to take tea with them at the Bombay Yacht Club. Ladies as well as gentlemen are welcome to make use of the building; all refreshments, however, must be ordered in the husband's name. The luxurious rooms resembled the saloon of a ship. They were extremely cool, and open to every breeze that blew.

Our friends were waiting for us on a huge, flat terrace stretching away out into the sea close to the Apollo Bunder. Little tables for refreshments stood around, and the pale, languid fashion of Bombay mustered in great numbers to see each other, and hear the Prince of Wales' band from the *Renown*. Darkness crept over us, and the harbour lights came to life one by one. The music wailed round us, and we felt no longer inclined to joke and laugh.

Many times we drove through the native quarter, and one night a gentleman resident piloted us through the crowded streets. Our coachman worked his way along, shouting and being shouted at, abusing and receiving abuse, and only when murder seemed imminent did the Sepoy on duty make some little remark, but his weariness of life never relaxed. We found ourselves in a new

world. The shop floors, raised some distance from the ground, were covered with mattresses, and on these the owners reclined or squatted quite at ease, their wares on shelves above them. They were comfortable, took their time to sell, expecting you to make yourself comfortable also, and take your time to buy.

Some of these men are to be met driving in fine carriages by the sea, their bare brown feet resting on the cushions of the front seat. They are rich, very rich, but the Bazaar has woven itself round their hearts, and they seldom leave it.

In one place a native wedding was being solemnised. The whole street seemed to be blocked with brilliantly dressed merry-makers. Not merry from our point of view, for in the East giggling and laughing do not go hand in hand with enjoyment, and even little children are serious. A band played, or at least made much noise. The bridegroom's horse, saddled in a manner more ornamental than useful, stood close by. The bride and her ladies were, of course, nowhere to be seen.

The next thing of interest was a Hindu temple. An officiating priest, naked to the waist, was thumping a gong. This was to announce to the gods that their dinner had been got ready. If after a certain time no deity put

in an appearance, the holy man felt at liberty to keep for himself the offerings of the faithful.

There are no draggled feathers or tattered flowers in the East. Poverty there is always picturesque. Round the fountains naked bronze figures were washing their single white garment. It must feel uncomfortable thus to put on clean clothes. Girls squatted in rows, and in every direction men were lying on the pavement sleeping, completely covered by a cotton wrap.

During the monsoon the death-rate from plague rises considerably, for many natives then spend the night huddled together in a small room infested with disease germs. We passed mosques, theatres, bathing-places, but our gaze always returned to the varied multitude jostling each other through the narrow streets.

I spent many delightful hours shopping. There is an utter absence of vulgarity about the natives. To me they all seemed to be princes in disguise.

One afternoon we formed a party, and went out by train to Bandra to play golf. We passed the Bombay laundry. Miles of clothes were lying out to dry, while tons were being washed in huge open sheds.

The golf ground was laid out on a high hill beside the sea. An encampment of native potters nestled in the

valley below. The men were working a huge wheel at the well, drawing up water in tiny buckets for their herd of donkeys.

Many of us preferred idleness to golf. Walking through the prickly-pear hedges, and climbing the sides of rocky mountains, was trying in the heat. Far more enjoyable was it to sit listening to the distant thump of the gods' dinner-gong, and watch the sky changing into lovely sunset tints, an ideal background for the tall, graceful palms.

The native caddie is a wonderful little fellow for finding balls, particularly if his wits have been sharpened by a few pence above his legitimate pay. Players fresh from England found it hard work driving off the hard-beaten clay greens, or rather the browns.

On our way to the links we passed many interesting sights. A sacred Peepul-tree with a native thatched hut under its shade, and a bridegroom sitting in solitary state before the door, his head done up in pink and white frilled paper like a ham bone.

Returning home after dinner, countless crickets charmed us at first with their chirping, but eventually bored us. Out here in the heat their little song is very noisy and monotonous.

One afternoon we drove down to Beach Candy (mean-

ing "beach beside the pass"). On our way we saw and admired the Mahaluxine Temple and Tank. Near huge flats, under shading palm-trees, stretched a soft ride and smooth carriage-road. Once upon a time the sea could wander over this spot and join that other sea. But the great mangrove swamps at low water bred fever and disease, so William Hornby, Governor, constructed Hornby's Vellard, and shut out the sighing ocean.

In the port of Bombay the European shops resemble public buildings. Their advertising names are hidden away under the stone coping, as if ashamed of their plebeian employment among such magnificent surroundings.

CHAPTER III

ELEPHANTA, PAREL, THE THEATRE, ETC.

We spent a pleasant afternoon at Elephanta. Friends took us in their steam-launch across the bay to the islands, recruiting our strength with a sumptuous tea on the way. I made a few sketches, an acquaintance guarding my property from the wind, and also helping me with his advice.

The pier, built to facilitate the landing of King Edward of England, is not what we should call a pier. Huge, square, isolate blocks of concrete run far out into the sea, passing the shallow swamps where grow the mangroves. I walked carefully along that pier, the occasional channels of open water being most disconcerting.

Children pursued us chattering, screaming and dancing. They wanted us to buy coloured beetles in old match-boxes. We did not much care for the beetles, but made the children happy by letting them scramble for coppers. Their fathers had erected a merry-go-

round. A ride cost something, and thus our money changed hands and went to the support of the household. It was a lesson in political economy.

One hardly ever hears a crying child. The little native boys never hunt cats or throw stones at wounded birds.

A fine staircase, cut out of the rock, led up to the caves, large trees growing on either side. However, they only shade one slightly from the blazing sun. When our destination was reached we were hot, but some of our fellow-passengers from the *Mooltan*, whom we met descending, looked even hotter. Having greeted each other as old friends and agreed about the state of the weather, we parted, perhaps never to meet again.

The great solemn cave temple is a place fit for prayer, silent, cool, and full of mystery. The principal, or central, chamber has been hewn out of the solid rock. Twenty-six carved pillars at one time supported the roof, but now many of them are broken, having been mutilated both by Mohammedan and Christian in earlier times. A colossal half-length statue of Shiva attracted our attention as we entered. As far as I can make out, a bad-tempered-looking Shiva signifies the destroyer, and one in good humour a preserver.

There are many lesser caves opening off the great central one. Carvings more or less damaged appear everywhere, and following a path through the jungle one finds more interesting relics of a thousand years ago.

The views were beautiful beyond description. Away beyond the water were hills upon hills; palm-trees stood gracefully out against the clear, bright sky, while mangrove clumps grew far out into the sea, hiding with a vestment of green an ugly, muddy flat.

None of us were allowed to visit the side of the island on which the fort was in process of construction, as the continual blasting operations made the road dangerous. It was here I first saw a bullock with a big, red sore on its neck. Since landing it had been a constant source of wonder to me that the poor beasts were not injured by the clumsy wooden cross-piece fastened to the pole of the waggon. The whole weight of the draught fell on their necks, which after a time became coated with a horny skin. People told me that the loads were always beautifully balanced, but watching the constant stream of traffic in the streets did not strengthen me in this belief.

We sat chatting, resting, cooling and sketching,

VIEW FROM THE SHORE OF ELEPHANTA ISLAND, BOMBAY

often pausing to watch the beautiful afterglow replace the blazing colouring of the day. Returning after dark we passed many Arab dhows, the sailors on them singing quaint, barbaric sea-songs to while away the time.

Some of Captain S——'s friends arranged for us to drive out to Parel and see that most interesting scientific institution. The huge old building stands in a large park resplendent with fine tropical trees. Here the Governor had formerly lived, entertaining the King of England, then Prince of Wales, and all Bombay.

Government House has now been removed to Malabar Hill.

I saw here for the first time the long-legged paddy-bird, hopping after its friend the grazing bullock. They hardly ever leave each other.

No punkahs cooled the big, bare rooms at Parel. The floors are not swept but washed, and everything possible is done to keep the dust from flying about. First of all we saw the many glass decanters of clear soup, having non-conducting stoppers of cotton-wool. In this soup the pampered plague-germs live and multiply. This "beef-tea" has to be made in a particular way, and sterilised. We explored the bright

kitchen where it is manufactured in the most up-to-date manner, but goat only, and not cow, can be employed in the making, for fear of prejudicing the Hindus against inoculation. After the germ has been coddled, it is killed by being exposed to heat many degrees above boiling-point, and it is with this dead microbe that people are inoculated.

Last, but not least, comes the bottling of this compound. The greatest care has to be observed during the process of filling the glass tubes, and a particular machine has been invented for the purpose. In the early days of the institution, nineteen people died of lockjaw owing to some dust having got mixed with the vaccine.

Captain S—— is a charming man. Receiving us in his shirt-sleeves, he explained everything in an untechnical manner suited to our limited knowledge.

Serpent poison is much used in medicine. Though one inoculated drop can kill you, I believe one might drink a pint without injury.

We were shown the snake-man handling his terrible charges, but this he never does unless his nerves are in first-rate order.

The cages were opened and the snakes let out, much

to our dismay, and even Captain S——'s assurance that he possessed an antidote did not get us off the tables. The professional snake-man pinned the reptile near the neck with a forked stick, and catching it in his hand close under the head, placed his bare foot on its tail. A glass, over which had been stretched some soft leather, was next presented for the reptile to bite, and about a tablespoonful of colourless fluid ran down its fangs into the vessel. Captain S—— wanted us to taste it, but when we heard that it had a horrible flavour we were not tempted to do so. Having been deprived of all their poison, the serpents were next fed with a mixture of milk and egg administered through a glass tube, as they will not eat of their own accord in captivity.

The cobra is not considered so dangerous as the russel's-viper. The former gets out of a man's way, but the latter, being lazy, waits to be walked upon, and then resents the attention with a bite.

Rats originate the plague, as the fleas which infest them spread the infection. The rat of Bombay is immune, and nature has wrought a cure for them. After long years of suffering, some day perhaps humanity may hope for the same luck.

I saw the plague microbe magnified. It appeared a thick oval in shape, with a dark patch at each end. It multiplies at the rate of something like a million a minute. (This statement may not be quite accurate.) Inoculation keeps one safe for about ten months. You may suffer from a mild form of plague, although people have been known to die of the disease even after inoculation. But hope on hope ever! scientific men are living and learning every day and all day long.

Captain S—— kindly gave us tea in a wide, shady stone porch, which reminded many who had visited Africa of the stoop in a Transvaal home. We drove off with the feeling that plague germs were walking all over us, and one lady woke the next morning under the impression that she had the disease fully developed. I am glad to say, however, that this was not a fact, and we lived happily afterwards, although we had been face to face with death in a bottle.

Some little distance from Parel there stood a kind of nursing home for animals; a veterinary hospital founded by a rich Parsee lady. It was indeed a charity to build such a place, for the Hindus will not kill, and they cannot cure. For a trifling charge, dogs, horses, bullocks, and cows are taken in to be properly attended

and fed. We walked through long, airy sheds. On a card over each animal's head was written its age, owner's name, and treatment. I noticed one horse which had met with a frightful accident, the hind leg having been partially cut off near the hip.

Driving home, it amused us to watch the natives beginning to retire into their poor, thatched hovels, the goats and hens preparing to accompany them. Tethered round stood the oxen, and having quenched their thirst at the drinking-troughs they were now trying to appease their hunger on straw which appeared to have been first used as packing for china and glassware. We saw a pair of oxen come down on a hill. It is very painful to see these heavy, timid animals fall.

The funeral of a rich native Catholic passed us one day. The first carriage of the procession contained many priests, vested and carrying a tall silver cross. An open hearse, ornamented with white feathers, and followed by a long line of mourners, came next.

Before leaving Bombay we visited a Parsee theatre. It was the very best establishment of the sort. The play was in Guzerati. We arrived after it commenced, and left before it finished. It was a play conducted on purely Eastern lines. They began to tell the story

of some rajah about 6 P.M., and had not finished at 8 A.M. They did not hurry. Boys dressed as women (females not being allowed on the stage) came and danced, sang, and gossiped to pass the time away. There was much native music, very marvellous, but a trifle monotonous. It gets on one's nerves, wears away the brain, and rings in one's ears for countless ages afterwards.

The inhabitants of India think we can teach them many things, but in music they consider us poor, simple ignoramuses. A gentleman sitting beside me, who was in the Civil Service, and therefore speaking about a hundred languages, translated the story of the play.

A great chief wanted his daughter to marry a certain man. The chief's wife had set her heart on another son-in-law, while the girl herself had chosen a third young fellow. I never learned how it all ended, as we had to leave at one o'clock in the morning, just when the English Political Resident entered on the scene to interfere. His get-up was truly wonderful. A layer of sticky white powder provided him with a British complexion. He wore a flaxen wig and sola topee, a piece of white elastic under his chin keeping it in place. He also wore, with conscious pride, a queerly cut blue serge suit, cricket shoes, driving gloves, and

evening tie. His wife was *en suite.* The magnificent dressing of the other characters showed off this get-up to advantage. They had wonderfully embroidered tunics, and coloured glass jewels the size of windows. They all, however, insisted on wearing the same sort of faded blue-cotton trousers right through the piece, and many came on with a bath-towel hanging over their shoulder. We left them singing and dancing, chattering and arguing, for fear of getting to the end of that story.

Before we bade Bombay good-bye we had a sail in a yawl-rigged yacht. The breeze carried us through the harbour at a great pace. The moon rose and shone. It seemed larger and brighter than the moon at home. On the water it was cool, almost cold, a delightful experience. While rowing to the pier on our return, I noticed that the native sailors rest between each stroke, and as they dip their oars in the water again call on Allah. At Madras I believe they shout, "Xavier, Xavier," in memory of St. Francis Xavier.

Before leaving for Bangalore, where I had arranged to pay a visit to some military friends, I attended a concert at St. George's Hospital. The music and singing were as usual, but all else was new to me. This institution is principally for friendless British subjects. Every shipping

company subscribes. There are different wards and different prices, so that an officer sees nothing of the man before the mast.

I thought it sad to see these great, strong seamen struck down by disease far from home, living on milk, and deprived of the "peg" and pipe they have learned to love so well. Many were sitting about in the cool verandah. High up near the roof and dormitories it was wonderfully draughty. No one talks of ventilation in India. I did not see a mosquito-net anywhere, the wind does away with these tormentors.

CHAPTER IV

DOWN SOUTH

I LEFT the Great Western Hotel with an *au revoir* to dear Bombay. Arriving at Victoria Station about two o'clock, every coolie around attended to me, and those who had nothing to carry expected to be paid as well as the man who made himself useful. They hovered about me like a swarm of bees, and were most trying to a British temper in a hot climate. However, I enjoyed my time at the railway station. It amused me to watch the coolies setting the other passengers swearing.

The Poona mail was a most comfortable train; one of the best in India. No hand-luggage was allowed in the carriages, the conductor stowing it away in a little van at the end of the corridor; and he actually refused a tip.

Our strong, puffy engines, one in front and one behind, pulled us up the ghâts (ghâts mean steps). They drew the train over a gradient of between 2000 to 3000 feet. Many accidents had happened in the

beginning by the breaks refusing to act, and passengers were shot over the precipice. Some natives argued that the English were unfair, as they killed more Hindus than Europeans by these mistakes. The company tried to explain that about a hundred Hindus travel to one Englishman; but they did not see the force of the argument, and perhaps never will.

Leaving Bombay, the scenery is wild and beautiful. Patches of still water, far-off ranges of queer-shaped hills, and bright green flats of growing rice surrounded by weird-shaped cactus hedges. Poona was reached at eighteen o'clock, this rather bewildering method of counting time being kept at all stations. Poona is the capital of the Deccan, and a fashionable, airy hill station. It was once the headquarters of the Peshwa, a kind of Mahratta robber chief. He had been deposed and pensioned by Sir John Malcolm, and in the year 1857 his adopted son, Nana Sahib, made things extra terrible for the English.

From Poona our train went to Madras, and we changed into that of South Mahratta railway, the mail running to Mysore. It was a narrow gauge, and fearing a crush, the station-master had been written to, and seats had been secured for us. We had the carriage

BUNGALOW, BANGALORE

to ourselves (few ladies seem to travel), and the tiny restaurant-car was a trifle lonesome. I found the Indian trains far more comfortable than the pretentious, crowded waggon-lits. They were large, airy, and deserted. For a mail train I thought we went slowly, there seemed so many stations, and the waits were very long. It took us two nights and a day to reach Bangalore. Still, while daylight lasted there was much to see, and at night we slept, a trifle fitfully perhaps, for the entire population of India seem to spend the hours of darkness in talking, but not in whispers.

More rain falls in the Deccan than elsewhere. The hay was protected from the floods by storing it on platforms supported by many crooked bamboo poles. The ricks looked like great fat daddy-long-legs. Under the shelter of a few trees the native villages were built, surrounded by prickly-pear and cactus hedges, while the herds of water-buffalo cows and goats wandered about searching for food, and eating dead stalks, the smallest boy in the settlement taking charge of them.

The scenery changed continually. Fertile patches near a well and habitation were followed by great barren plains and tracts of deserted forest, where the timber seemed neither old nor beautiful. I noticed teak

and, in the south, tall feathery bamboo. There was also a big leafless tree covered with masses of bright yellow-red blossoms, which the natives call "Flame of the Forest." It stood out against the dark foliage of the wood like a fire at night. Broad, smooth, red roads stretched straight away like the line of life, sometimes with trees on either side, but more often only bordered at intervals by large white stones.

I saw many queer brown ruins, and at Belgaum there was a handsome dark stone stronghold. It made one long to leave the train and wander about.

I remarked a Catholic priest on the platform. He was nearly black. These things strike one who sees them for the first time.

At many of the stations a couple of ownerless dogs went round looking for food. People were not actively unkind to them, and, as no one wore boots, the animals never feared a kick. In their young days some of them had apparently been reckless, nevertheless, and had left a leg under the wheel of some engine. Poor three-legged creatures! limping through life as best they could.

The feeding on the train was not too bad, although we found the mutton as tough as boots. However, omelettes were excellent, and some other things eatable.

One evening a gentleman dined with us. He related how he and his wife had undergone the operation of inoculation for cholera. It appeared to have been something of an experiment. The vaccine used contained enough microbes to kill fifty people, and my friend and his wife had been ill, nearly dying, for months. Terror of a disease fades away before such experiences.

We reached Bangalore at 5.30 A.M., and being asleep at the time, I was nearly carried on to Mysore.

A sweetly picturesque native orderly met me. He hired a bullock-cart and took charge of my luggage. I entered a gharry, and after thirty minutes' drive found myself at a bungalow in the cantonment near Ulsoor Tank.

Every house appeared to be situated in a miniature desert of red sand. Trees grow sometimes by the wall or near the gate. In a tiny oasis of flowers, and almost hidden by creepers, stood a long, low, plastered building. The dining-room and drawing-room opened off a large stone porch. The bedrooms and bathroom squeeze themselves in round about somewhere, and there are no passages. If you sneeze you can be heard all over the house. The place is high, large, and airy. When you want anything you do not look for the bell, for there is

none. You just shout "Boy!" and practice patience, for some one has certainly heard you, only it takes time to find the white-linen-dressed person whose duty it is to answer your call.

A mali (native gardener) brings your bath water, and takes great pride in the flowers, but he snubs the tropical plants which do so well, and spends all his time attending to the English seedlings which won't grow. He passes his mornings running down the road for water, and returns with it in two little earthenware pots, fastened to a bamboo pole and slung over his shoulder. He is hired with the house, and is not a bit conceited, though his ancestors have all been gardeners for countless generations.

The next great personage about the place is the ayah. You cannot dress without her, for she hides all your things, and no one can find them but herself. She steals into your room early in the morning; treats you as something between a child and a lunatic, praising all you do, and would let you drive out with your hat back to front sooner than find fault. She gossips all day long, to amuse you, in the most terrible English, and ceases only to quarrel with the butler, who is her deadly enemy.

FLOWERS AT BANGALORE

The latter is a great character. He is the main prop of the household, and, as a rule, robber-in-chief. After a bit he begins to understand what you like to eat and drink. Change your bill of fare and you throw him into convulsions.

If you keep a horse you have to provide that animal with a syce, a man to cut grass, and a little boy to stand at its head and whisk away the flies.

I was never bored in India except by the coppersmith bird. This terrible creature sang his one little song all day. The note sounds like water dropping into an empty tin pail. He kept at it all the time we sat in the verandah trying to get cool, but when the sun set and every one went out driving, and, consequently, might not hear him, he became silent and rested.

Bangalore is a military station, presented to the English nation by the Maharajah of Mysore. It is considered cool for India, although strangers fry there. The sun, the ayah told me, sometimes gives the native population a headache.

Tanks have always been used to collect the rainfalls of the south. The first year the monsoon fails, the cattle and people are hungry; the second year they starve.

We only hear about it when they actually starve, for every one and every thing is nearly always hungry. Children break branches off the trees to feed the goats. Cattle wander over the bare maidan, but when the women realise that cows don't fatten on red dust, they wade into the water and collect bundles of reeds, which they carry home on their heads.

After a famine, tigers having fed on the many who cannot feed themselves, become man-eaters, and are dangerous, but otherwise they are harmless enough. I was shown a missionary who met a tiger—they both fled.

A gentleman told me he once travelled with a tourist who kept his head out of the window for hours. His fellow-travellers conquered their British reserve, and implored him to sit down, but he wouldn't, as he said he was afraid of missing the herds of tigers, &c.

I found one was quite a personage after having seen anything larger than a black ant. These are the animals I met:—

White ants. They eat through your boxes, but do not care for French cane trunks. They finish a square yard of carpet in a night, and like to make clay walks over your boots.

The red ants are nothing much; they are small, and are generally served up with your sugar.

The black ant is a huge, terrifying creature. They walk into your bathroom towards evening a thousand at a time. I never waited to turn them out—I always fled.

Then there are all kinds of cockroaches; some fly, some only look at you. A few flying cockroaches cleared the ladies' club one evening. They wheeled round and round and then flopped.

Caterpillars are the size of sausages. There were also quantities of what looked like flower-buds or sticks, which turned out to be alive when you touched them.

The fashionable time at Bangalore to make calls is between twelve and two midday, when the sun is at its prime. I might have enjoyed it more had it been cooler and the people easier to find. The syce, of course, never knew where any one lived. I should think they hardly knew themselves, for the bungalows and roads are all alike. People painted their names on the gates for fear of mistakes. There were two thousand gates, and it was tiring work reading two thousand names and sorting your acquaintances from the mass.

Being a stranger, I saw and heard many things interesting to me. I tried to talk flowers, but found no

one knew much about them, although living in a spot called the Garden of India. They kept nearly all their plants in pots so as to be able to sell them when ordered to another station. An acre of pots may have been economical, but it was not ornamental.

At one house a nice little boy came and told us that mammy and daddy were out, but we might come in and see auntie. Another lady preferred Bangalore to Secunderabad because she got bad butter there. Many had settled out here, having no home ties.

In India one can enjoy luxuries on a small income. At every house the servant had a box on which was written "Not at home;" a silver salver meant the other thing. You were thus spared a long and involved conversation.

Tamils (natives) down south mostly speak English of an extremely peculiar sort. If you require your carriage in a hurry, you will get it on remarking, "Gharry urgent, wanted."

Some avenues were bordered with hedges of blue plumbago in flower, whilst crotons grew everywhere. A lovely creeper, named Shower of Gold, covered many a porch. The name described it to perfection.

Most people possessed a languid dog. "Bulls" seemed

ULSOOR TANK, BANGALORE

to thrive best; they generally wanted to come away with visitors, and get a little air mounted on the front seat. I met a funny specimen of that tribe while sketching Ulsoor Tank, near the gate of a bungalow. I shivered with terror when the ferocious creature came up and looked at me. All the stories I had heard about the wickedness of bulldogs occurred to my mind. He went away and returned with a little fox-terrier, who jumped on me and made friends. Then I saw he was nervous, and my courage returned. Presently the tiniest of little curs came along. The two dogs with me rushed out to commit murder, Hop-o'-me-thumb barked, and they ran away. The heat had ruined their nerve.

There were tea-parties nearly every day. We sat under the trees and had music, or native girls danced, kicking up a dust that did not improve the bread and butter. After listening to their monotonous drone for some time, I felt as if I had a humming-top inside my head.

Many spent their evenings at the club, which had been equally divided between the ladies and the gentlemen. On the ladies' side there were Bridge, newspapers, and gossip. I do not know what the gentlemen did, as the rules insisted on their being left severely alone. A large

library stood in its own compound near the shops. The literature was excellent, but gossiping had to be carried on in whispers.

Dinners, theatricals, dances, polo, and golf were always going on. The officer's wife in India must have amusement, as she has no home and no fireside.

One morning I drove with friends to call on the Ranee of Mysore. She was a great lady, and lived surrounded by lavish extravagance and squalid discomfort.

The Maharajah's residence at Bangalore stands in a tropical imitation of an English park. Entering a huge gateway, we noticed grandly-dressed mounted guards patrolling round. Terraces ran along the entire length of the red sandstone palace. Rows of cannas were flowering against the carved balustrade. Beyond some fountains played, sacred naudis (bulls), and masses of bright plants bloomed everywhere.

Our carriage drew up under an archway in the centre of the building, and a beautifully-got-up official saluted. Some mechanical instrument played soft music, while we left our cards and wrote all about ourselves in a book.

The Maharajah entertains nearly the whole of Bangalore during the race week at Mysore. He lodges them in tents, and manages everything on a princely scale.

I had an opportunity of observing him during some military sports. I heard that he was unhappily married, and does not affect ladies' society. I thought him handsome, and also most becomingly dressed in a beautifully fitting frock-coat and trousers; his turban made of those wonderful stuffs called woven air, or captive sunshine. He looked dignified in spite of his gold earrings, kissing his finger-tips to acquaintances by way of salutation.

On Thursday we visited the Residency. Mrs. Stuart Fraser received on that day. We were shown into an endless room, large as a cathedral, and shaped like a cross.

On the 1st of January, early in the morning, a march-past of the many troops stationed at Bangalore took place. On the presentation of a pass our carriage was allowed into the enclosure, the horse unharnessed and led away. We had a lovely view near the flag-staff, to which the Union Jack clung, for there was no breeze. Regiment after regiment filed on to the huge maidan, looking in the distance like coloured beetles. The *feu de joie* sounded, loud as a peal of thunder, every soldier firing simultaneously, while "God Save the King" was played. The general and his staff bounded about over the field, the horses bucking like wild deer; but this was not in the programme. After a second

feu de joie, the Resident, in a handsome dark uniform, and also the general and his staff took up their positions under the British flag, and the march-past began.

First came the cavalry, preceded by their band. The men, who had to keep their attention on the musical instruments, had arranged matters with their horses. These animals were wonderful, and made no mistake. I thought it a fine sight, and splendidly noisy, for each regiment had its own band, and they all played with vigour a different air as they marched by. The native soldiers looked fit for fairyland, and saluted in Eastern fashion.

The Maharajah Horse were a magnificent body of men, and the native sappers, faithful during the Mutiny, seemed particularly striking. Their well-groomed mules, having loads of spades, &c., kept in step with the music, and displayed quite an intelligent knowledge of what they were about.

At Secunderabad I believe there was an elephant battery which saluted the general by raising their trunks in the air. They are, however, of little use in battle, bolting at the first shot. Bullocks are generally used to drag the guns into action.

ULSOOR TANK, BANGALORE

The English shops stood in their own compound, like detached villas. Between them and Ulsoor Tank ran the native bazaar, a fascinating place. I think there was but one chair in the street, which went round with the English customer. They never hurry in the East, and by the time the chair has been borrowed and the purchaser comfortably seated, much of the morning had passed away. I found it dangerous to wander about searching for what I wanted (a native prefers bringing everything you have not asked for), as on the floor fine gold and jewel work lay in process of manufacture.

The coolie girls are beautiful, graceful creatures. I watched some of them at work. One man stood by a hole in the road, and another remained near a little heap of clay, with which he filled the small ornamental baskets of about half-a-dozen brightly clad women, holding themselves like queens, and jingling their silver and glass bangles and ankle-rings as they walked. They received and gave up their loads with an easy, languid grace, which filled me with admiration. Their hands and arms were beautifully shaped, and a simple coloured cotton garment was draped in a way impossible to describe or imitate. They earn about four rupees a month, and live on an anna a day.

The amount of copper coins contained in one penny is enormous. The small change circulating through a bazaar would load an elephant, and not lightly either.

The beggars are gentle, miserable-looking creatures. They wander about and are thankful for a mouthful of some coolie's dinner, whilst the gift of the nineteenth part of a farthing fills them with delight. A pauper in the East is not the influential character that he is in Christian countries, for how very poor the poor must be who beg in a land where men live on a penny per day! Natives are charitable to one another, but they marry so young that the old people get lost and left behind. The Little Sisters of the Poor find many destitute. These poor things enjoy imitating the Sisters, and chant prayers in Tamil for their own amusement. Sometimes, after long years of care, an old man or woman may remark, "We want a little water on our heads, like mother." This is their conception of Christianity.

In some Catholic chapels one sees a mass of bright-coloured beings, squatting on the matting round an ascetic-looking French missionary. They bring their little babies with them, and the church becomes nearly as noisy as an infant school.

ULSOOR TANK, BANGALORE

That curse of the East, mixed marriages, produce a heart-breaking race called Eurasians. Bangalore is full of them. They look down on their native fathers, or mothers; are sensitive, revengeful, and unreliable. The dark and fair child of the same family are deadly enemies. Sometimes their poverty is extreme; a naked, helpless, starving wretchedness, so fearful that even the priest dare hardly visit them.

Sometimes peddlers came and spent their morning on the verandah. They fix their handsome eyes upon your face and seem to read your inmost soul, regulating their prices accordingly.

Often trusting to my own cleverness, I have been taken in by a princely creature who ought to have known better. At last I concluded no purchase without the assistance of the ayah, an honest creature with an impossible style of beauty. Bright eyes, very dark skin, and coarse black hair, swimming in grease; her nose, ears, and forehead covered with jewels—and then, her English! But we all have our difficulties in a strange tongue. I was told of an officer who went to bathe, leaving his servant sitting on the bank guarding his clothes. Cramp seized him as he swam out of his depth, and he feared he was sinking. His servant sat

on, complacently gazing at the sky, and he could not yell an explanation of his position as he had forgotten the Hindustani word for drowning. At last, in desperation, he was inspired to shout, "I drink more cold water than I want."

It is wonderful to see the natives kite-flying on the maidan of an evening, near the sappers' mess. In India children do not fly kites; they look on and envy their parents' amusement, hoping that some day they may be able to do likewise. I suppose they feel much as our young ones do who long to play Bridge.

It is a science to get the kite into the air, it is also a science to keep it there; and thus it is that only scientific men can spend their time kite-flying.

CHAPTER V

MYSORE

One dark, hot morning before dawn, I left Bangalore city station for Mysore. The country through which the train passed was interesting and no longer barren. They cultivate water in the south, as we do land, and manufacture huge tanks or artificial lakes in which to store the monsoon rains and overflow from wells.

The ground was undulating with many roads, shading trees, aloe hedges, and watercourses. Near Gospet the isolated Droogs (rocks the height of mountains) began to appear, rising above the breezy plains of Mysore. Here and there were forests of graceful palm and jungle.

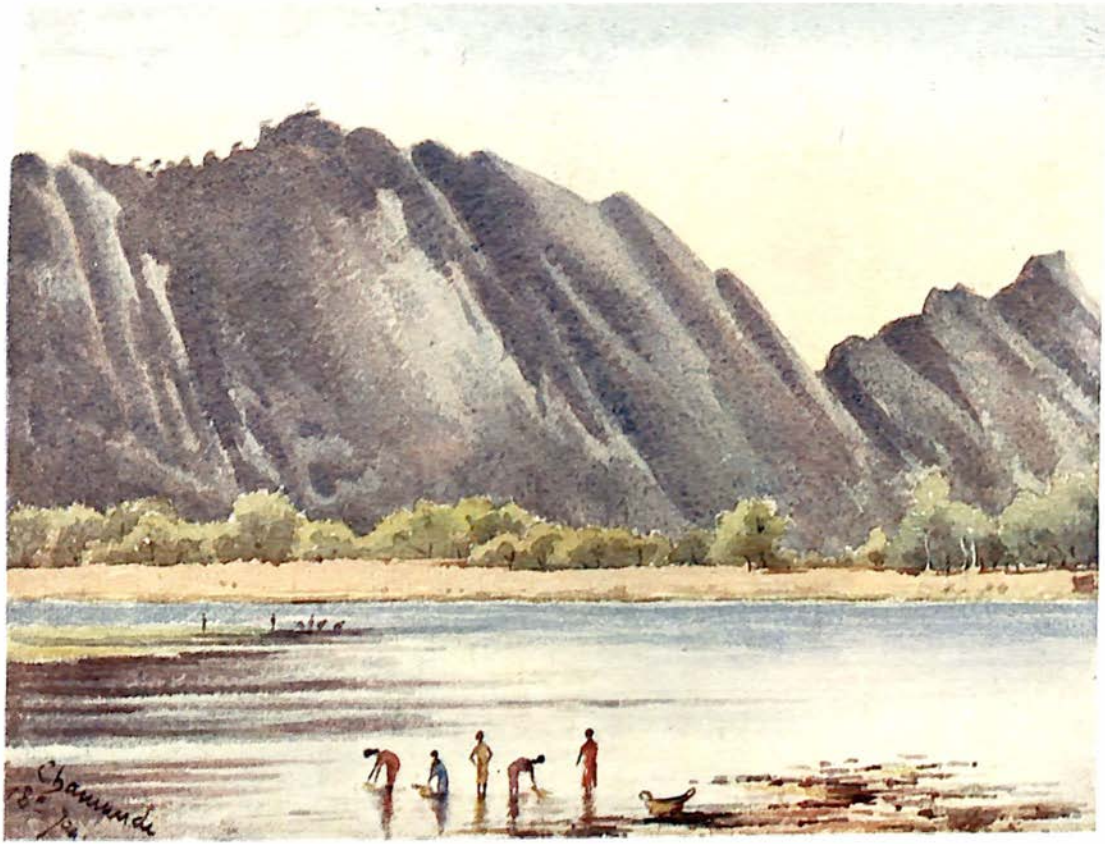
Luncheon by the way at Maddur struck us as quite an ambitious meal, which we paid for at the same time that we bought our tickets, before starting.

Mysore was reached at fifteen o'clock. The Gordon Hotel had a carriage waiting at the station. It was not much of a vehicle, and the horse had the wooden action

of a mechanical toy. The entire staff, headed by the proprietor, met me at the door, and I was conducted to my bedroom as if I had been some great personage. It was a quaint place, without its rival in the world. My apartment was reached by a fancy stone staircase running up the outside wall in front. It had unexpected steps, and twists, and turns. I nearly broke my neck, and scraped the leather off my shoes many a time. One always wanted an umbrella or light on that staircase. I could have an umbrella, but never a light unless when the moon was good enough to oblige. The doors of the rooms opened on to a verandah gallery strewn with chairs and native servants. There was no ostentation about the furnishing, and the beds were stuffed with a substance like dry sticks, which I believe they call coir, and is really cocoanut husks. The outer door of the bathroom opened on to a stone terrace built out at the back. The sitting-rooms downstairs were uncomfortable, the tables and heavy seats so placed as to be neither ornamental nor useful.

There were some nice people stopping at the hotel with me, but we never sat together except at meals—that drawing-room was impossible.

The feeding I thought good, and the table decora-



MYSORE

tions of coloured sand terribly magnificent. On receiving my bill I discovered I had been charged four rupees per day for all these luxuries, certainly not much for little breakfast, big breakfast, tea, and dinner. Carriage hire was also extremely cheap, though the poor horses looked more fit to be buried than to be driven.

Mysore is built round a great lake, at the foot of a sacred isolated hill called Chamundi. Large trees shaded most of the roads. When I was there they were being decorated with bands of red and white paint in honour of the Prince of Wales, and for the same reason the houses had started little trimmings of pink and white paper. The roads, too, had been rendered impassable from the peculiar manner in which they had been repaired, having first been dug up and then coated with soft sifted red clay, which became spongy, like butter after a thunderstorm. I stuck in it, and the four huge bullocks dragging the roller stuck in it, and I expect on his arrival the Prince's procession was also deeply embedded in the compound.

The bullocks of Mysore are famous. I saw some sweet little toys with glass beads round their necks. They trotted along quite fast. I arrived in time to admire the animals decorated for the great cow festival.

They were painted up a trifle peculiarly. Some had little pink squares all over them, their horns coloured or gilded, and finished off with brass knobs or woollen tassels. I remarked many drivers sitting on the cross-piece between the heads of the leading oxen of a team. I pitied the poor creatures, as their tired necks were bent almost to the ground under the extra weight.

One morning I started off early to climb Chamundi. One reads that it is 3500 feet high. A holy hill with a temple at the top, in which human sacrifice had at one time been offered. Half-way up the mountain sits the famous carved Naudi, or sacred bull of Siva.

I drove round the lake under shading trees. All looked lovely and deserted, as most of the inhabitants were in the water washing. I passed intricately carved brown Hindu temples, hidden away in the swampy shade of palm and plantain forests. On arriving at the foot of the hill I left the carriage and started to walk up the thousand steps, carrying a couple of oranges and my sketching materials. Those steps were cut anyhow and anywhere. It was the most fatiguing walk I ever remember taking. I passed through a village before commencing the ascent, and the whole native population turned out and started up the hill with me. They

were as nice as could be, and did not bother in the least, but it made me hot and nervous to become thus suddenly a spectacle. Happily one little baby boy wanted to walk, he would not let himself be carried or left behind. I blessed that tiny black child, for he delayed the procession, and speeding on my way I outstripped the crowd.

I climbed and climbed. The sun shone hotter and hotter. Stunted trees and seedmus grew here and there among the boulders, and also many picturesque little buildings were perched about. The great stone bull lies half-way up the hill. It is a hundred times larger than the animal, carved out of a single block of hard rock, and is black with age. Its expression is complacent and satisfied. It seemed to say, "I have done Siva. He must just walk the rest of the way."

A priest living in a little hut close by had surrounded the Naudi with superannuated street lamps and a dressing-table.

I walked on and on, seeing more and more of the breezy plains of Mysore, and wishing I had had strength of mind to stop half-way up, like the bull.

At home we have a hill, and the fashion is to take people up to the top and show them seven counties.

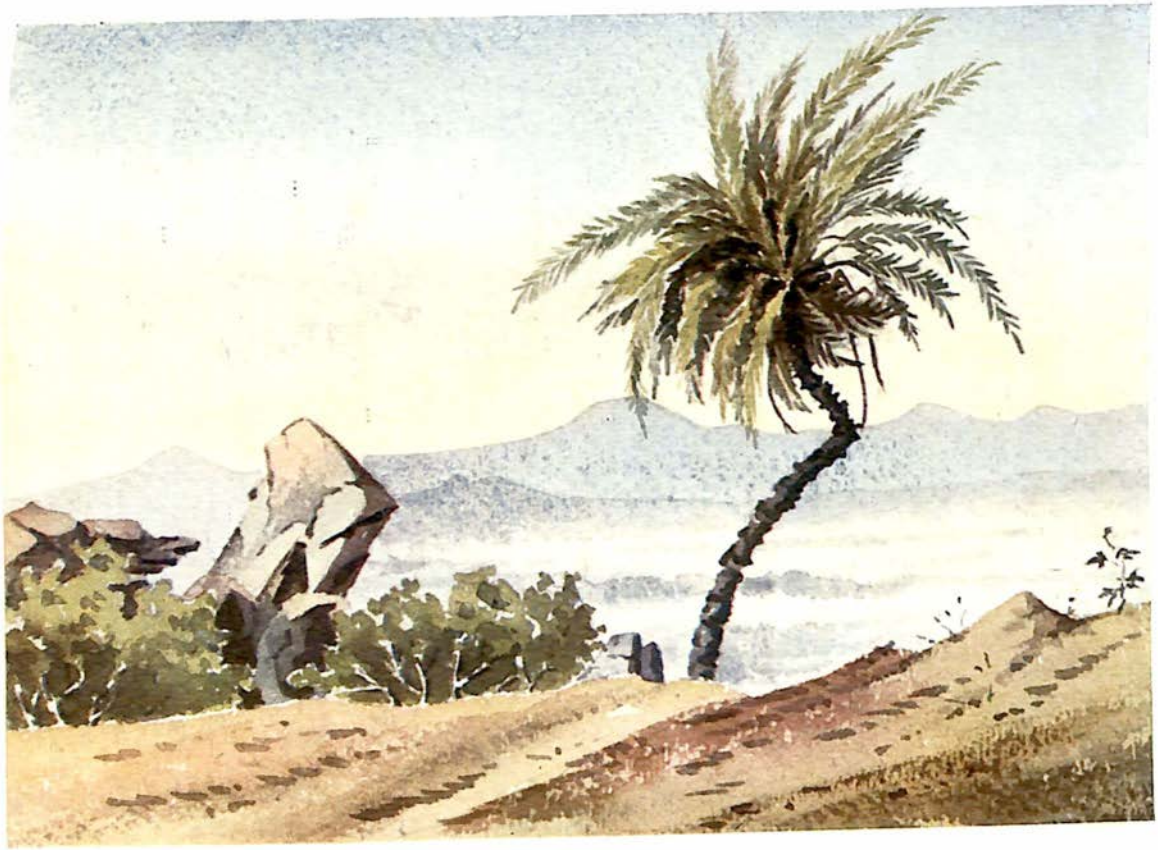
I think, however, if Chamundi was in our neighbourhood, that fashion would cease to exist. To climb it once in a lifetime is sufficient.

When I had accomplished the thousand steps I ate an orange and looked at the temple, which is a beautifully carved brown stone building clinging to the brow of the hill. There was also a village near, but the inhabitants were busy and did not trouble me. I rested, and sketched the distant plain — a crooked palm-tree standing amongst the rocks.

Most people who have made this excursion seem to remember that tree better than anything else, for it was most likely at this spot that they allowed themselves a little rest.

I found the descent almost as fatiguing as the ascent, The steep, happy-go-lucky steps were anything but easy walking. On my return home after breakfast, or luncheon, or whatever the meal was called, I tried to get some sleep but failed, for they kept knocking me up the whole afternoon. This is one of the characteristics of an Indian hotel. Call, and nobody will answer, but try to take a little rest and the numerousness of the hotel staff will amaze you.

The Maharajah Palace was surrounded by high old



VIEW FROM CHAMUNDI HILL, MYSORE

fort walls, beautifully aged and moss-grown. A fine park garden led up to the building, and near by, amongst a perfect chaos of workmen and material, stood the new palace, completely hidden by a network of bamboo scaffolding. What would an English mason say, I wonder, if asked to stand on a bare pole six hundred feet from the ground to build a wall?

A workman scenting a rupee, seized on me and showed me completely over the interior, explaining things quite wonderfully by signs. To me it appeared a perfect town, but it will take seven years more to finish it. Through a magnificent portico the central court is reached, and into the surrounding galleries of marble arches and carved pillars, hundreds of apartments open. The audience chamber, although not quite finished, was a thing to see. The floors were of precious marble mosaic, as fine as those I was shown in the house of the Vestal Virgins, in the Roman Forum. Polished marble pillars supported and divided the room into three. There were silver, inlaid, and carved wooden doors. At one end of the hall was fixed a beautiful purdah screen of pierced marble, and through this the ladies of the harem may peep at the world beyond. The marble is pierced to-day as it was a thousand years ago. The workman takes a small

tin cylinder, a little moist, gritty sand, and after working round and round for long years, a hole appears. The toil of this painstaking performance makes the marble look like ivory.

I did not admire any of the figures, sculptured, carved, or inlaid. They generally represented fat, naked dancing-women. However, the modelling of flowers and fruit was lovely. In a side room artists sat engaged in making clay designs, which were afterwards to be copied.

The Indian workman imitates most wonderfully, but he is not very reliable; for instance, no two small pillars of a balustrade are exactly alike. This can be easily discovered on close examination, but they pass muster when carelessly glanced at.

I saw some men making a fearful alabaster model of the palace. My guide took great pride in the terrible little horror, and expected my admiration with calm assurance.

After climbing a dangerous bamboo ladder, I discovered about a mile of flat roof. It is from here the ladies of the harem will take the air, and enjoy a view almost as fine as that obtained from the top of Chamundi.

My bedroom window looked out on a busy roadway, and often during the heat of the day, when sleep was

denied me, I spent my time gazing on the changing life below. Donkeys passed unbridled, but often muzzled, their poor little thin legs bending under the weight of huge sacks stuffed with dirty or clean clothes. Dhobies and potters alone make use of the tiny, starved donkey.

Every bullock-cart seemed different; no two were alike. The Indian power of invention has been expended in their production.

The great white ox is a lovely creature. It has a slow, dignified walk, a sweet, patient expression, and treats mankind with great forbearance.

Funerals often passed down the street. In India it is the fashion to carry the dead to their last resting-place —a burning ghât, perhaps—at a sharp trot. Many bodies were sitting upright, tied to chairs decorated with plantain branches, which formed a kind of bower. The bearers give a weird, short shout at intervals as they run along with the corpse. I was told that the poor could not always afford enough wood to burn the bodies completely, consequently their relatives were left about half cooked.

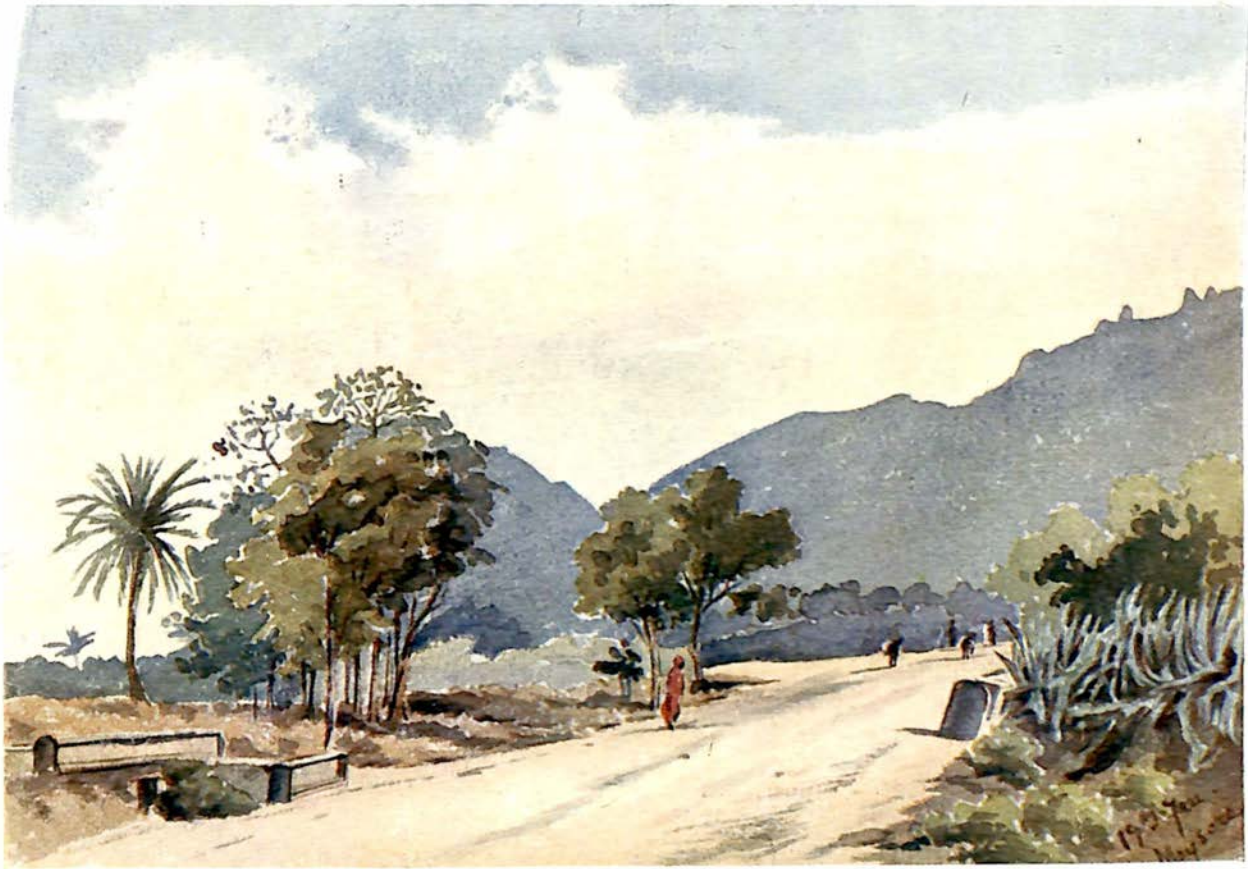
I saw a baboon-man. He ran at a great pace up the road, looking like a huge ape. He had on a white cotton garment.

A notice, hung in the hall of the hotel, stated that the

manager could supply a carriage and post-horses for any excursion visitors might wish to take. It was, however, with fear and trembling that I started early one morning for Seringapatam.

This interesting city possesses no hotel or dak bungalow, but it has plenty of fever. I was provided with luncheon, a big white horse and decrepit victoria. The poor animal had been a fine trotter in its day, and kept up a good pace from force of habit. Once we got outside the town of Mysore and its roads prepared for royalty, the horse found it easy work, the highway being level and hard. The day was cool, and the country picturesque to a degree. Huge trees shaded us, their trunks dabbed with pink and white paint for the Prince's visit. No ditch or hedge shut out the lovely view, whilst often we passed through a jungle, the palm-trees festooned with rare creepers. We crossed a bridge over the Cauvery, where a town of the past had been built at the bend of the river. Broad stone steps led down to the water. It was a beautiful place.

We changed our quaint white horse for another even quainter, which we found tied to a tree in the forest. We also changed coachman, for death alone separates the native driver from his animal.



ROAD AT MYSORE

Turning off the high-road, the syce drove down a rough track to the haunted bungalow, but perhaps deserted would be a more correct term to apply to it. This is the story—not, however, told me by the coachman, with whom I could only communicate by signs, having first aroused his attention by poking him in the back.

Once upon a time—in reality about ninety years ago—an officer, his wife and children inhabited that house. One day, on returning from the business in which he was engaged, he found them dead—all quite dead of cholera. Nothing was ever heard of that man again. He disappeared—vanished.

The races in India have peculiar ideas—queer customs. That bungalow is kept as it was left, repaired and guarded by the Mysore Government.

English travellers are brought to see it. They do not know exactly why. It stands in a palm-wood, roses and flowers bloom around, and behind is a stone terrace with steps running down into the river. Caretakers keep the place in order, but they do not make themselves a nuisance. If you feel extravagantly inclined, give one of them twopence for a rose.

I explored all the house. The furniture was arranged as the owner left it. The chair-legs showed signs of

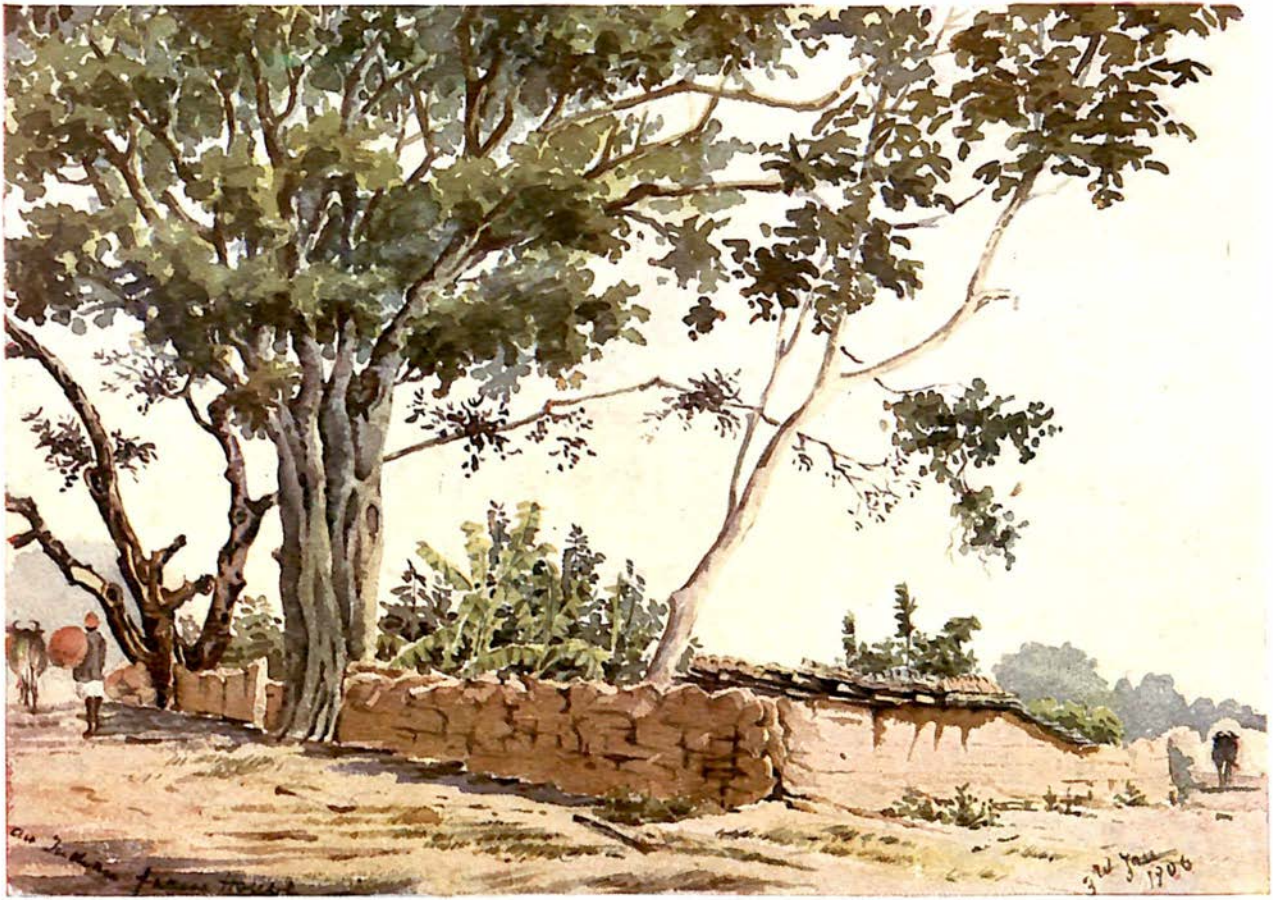
failure as they stood round the dining-room table, on a square of what had once been carpet. A beautifully inlaid sideboard, with sliding panels, ran the whole length of the room. There was also a silent, old-fashioned piano. Coloured, faded prints, of the time of King George, hung on the walls. Upstairs nothing remained but two huge beds splendidly inlaid with mother-of-pearl. They stood high off the ground, and had a kind of fretwork protection running round three sides of them. The poles for mosquito-netting remained intact.

Poor man! What became of him after finding his wife and children dead in those beds? Did he rush away and throw himself in the river? or, did he wander off and die of cholera during his mad flight through the jungle? Who knows? Who can tell?

A planter related another curious story to me. Some natives had gone out with an Englishman tiger-shooting, but instead of his killing the tiger the tiger killed him. Every year a bottle of brandy and some cigars are laid in the jungle to appease his spirit, which the poor Hindus fear is angry with them.

We next drove to the Lal Bagh, where Hyder Ali and Tippoo are buried.

On entering the gateway a charming old Mohammedan



AN INDIAN FARM-HOUSE, BANGALORE

took possession of me, and, removing his shoes, showed me round. He was a sweet old gentleman, and quite unlike the ordinary guide, for he spoke only three words of English. I understood that I might go round in my boots, enter the mausoleum, and examine Tippoo's tomb, but that the mosque was forbidden fruit. This I did not regret, as it looked terribly unfurnished.

The mausoleum is dome-shaped and has four entrances, the doors being of ebony inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Bunches of peacock feathers lay around the coffin.

My guide gave me a very strongly-scented flower, which grew near the memorial erected to Captain Baillie, who died a prisoner in Tippoo's hands.

On leaving I presented my bare-footed conductor with a rupee, and felt honoured at his accepting it, and thus, with many salaams and smiles, we parted, I starting for Tippoo's Summer Palace, situated in the Darya Daulat Bagh, or Garden of the Sea's Wealth. It is a square building standing among beautiful trees and flowers. A stone verandah shades the outside walls, on which are painted the most comic frescoes in the world. One picture represents the defeat of Captain Baillie by Hyder Ali. The former is realising the state of affairs with his head on one side, and a finger in his mouth. Tippoo

appears marching into battle on top of his prime minister, who seems to be respectfully going to the war backwards, and keeping off the flies with a feather fan. Most of the English soldiers are painted as lying on their backs, legs in the air, and, I suppose, too much defeated to even run away.

I had a most voluble guide, a great admirer of these works of art, and he made it his business to see that I missed none of them.

The palace had been re-touched and re-gilded at a cost of many thousand rupees, in honour of the Prince of Wales. The interior struck me as beautiful in a kind of Moorish style. In the thick wall of the reception-room was a staircase of terribly steep steps. My guide showed me the way to the upper storey. I thought I was alone, and felt surprised to find him at my elbow after the ascent. He had politely used another staircase: there are four of them, I believe. From the roof I had a splendid view of the garden and Tippoo's bath. I soon exhausted the delight of the different, not very numerous, apartments.

This Eastern hero squatted on a species of gallery built high up above the Hall of Audience, a little fret-work protection preventing his slippers from falling on

the heads of those beneath. It must have been an ideal spot for a little quiet conversation with friends below.

My driver stopped outside a mosque, which, of course, he knew I should not be allowed to enter. Two slender white minarets stood on each side, and up one of them I was permitted to climb by myself, there being no room for the guide, who remained below, not seeing the necessity of mounting the one on the other side.

I found my little excursion very hot and dusty. There were many small windows and niches for lamps all the way up to the top, where the Mohammedans call the faithful to prayer through four arched openings. They must have wonderful voices to be heard so far away from the world. It made me feel giddy to look down on my little black speck of a carriage in the street below. We drove through the picturesque old gateway, which once guarded the bridge into the fort, for the river Cauvery here divides and forms an island. The English once stormed Seringapatam; the breach in the wall by which they entered can be seen, if one only knew which breach it was, for there are about a dozen there now.

The most beautiful and very sacred ancient Temple of Vishnu Shri Ranga stands among park-like fields.

The tall gopuras, carved to the very top, were finished off with golden spire-like ornaments sparkling in the sun. Rupees did not gain admittance. I wonder were they doing up the gods inside in honour of the Prince of Wales ?

Close by there was a single-span bridge, which some one had built for his amusement. "It comes from nowhere and goes nowhere," as I once heard an Irish railway porter remark about a train. This extraordinary work of art shakes alarmingly whenever any one develops enough energy to walk over it.

Having eaten my luncheon I returned home, the clouds of a thunder-storm racing after the carriage, the hood of which would not keep shut unless I propped it up with my umbrella. Happily I reached Mysore first. There was, however, only one glass window in my room, so plenty of thunder-storm splashed about on the floor.

This was only the second time it had rained since my arrival in India. Accustomed as I am at home in Ireland to months of moisture, it seemed like meeting an old friend after years of absence.

As I sat by the lake, sketching, I could hear the wild beasts roaring in a kind of Zoo' belonging to the Maharajah, so having finished my work I went off to

see them, missing, however, the right entrance, and breaking my way into the presence of the head man, who was most polite, and insisted on showing me round himself. He was English, and had seen the ups and downs of life. He talked much of "'Is 'Ighness the Maharajah," and said he found him a charming master. He was married and contented.

There was not much horticultural display about the place, but all the animals were well cared for and interesting. They seemed quite tame, and with exception of the civet cat, welcomed my companion's approach. Nothing wins the civet to love. A baby elephant stood under a tree. I rubbed it down. It was a sweet thing, about the size of a Shetland pony. It had been reared on a baby's bottle, for the poor mother got killed in an elephant hunt.

My friend told me, that 'Is 'Ighness the Maharajah had surrounded a portion of jungle, into which tigers were driven, and was keeping and feeding them to shoot in honour of the Prince of Wales. They had plenty of tigers in Mysore, but they procure their lions from the Zoological Gardens in Dublin.

Before leaving, the man showed me a pond. "I once had a little boy of six," said he. "I found him

dead in that pond. He must have fallen in while reaching to pick a flower. And he didn't die easy, either, for there is very little water. We found him standing against the steep bank, where he had been trying to get his mouth into the air. He was so young he didn't think of fighting his way to the steps, and then he got frightened—the frightened look was in his eyes when we found him."

Before leaving I bought some Mysore cloths, as people call them. They are cheap, being only gold tinsel gummed on muslin, but the effect is good as long as the gold sticks to the muslin.

I returned to Bangalore by the night train, the whole of the hotel staff seeing me off, and my carriage-boy running through the unlighted streets of Mysore, clearing the way for me with the most unearthly yells. The confusion and noise was all the more fearful as I could not see where it was coming from. The station-master, however, had a ladies' carriage reserved, and a railway porter became my slave for fourpence. I slept comfortably until I reached Bangalore at dawn, and returned to my friend's bungalow, just before the arrival of the Prince of Wales.

CHAPTER VI

BANGALORE AGAIN

On the afternoon of my return I went with an officer's wife to visit the female branch of her husband's regiment. We began with the head lady, and I was amazed at the style and artistic arrangement of her house. She provided tea, after which we started on a tour through the lines.

Far from home the English sergeant of a native regiment is a great man, and his wife a great woman. She keeps her gharry, ayah, and boy; plays lawn-tennis, fills her comfortable quarters with Indian art rubbish, and joins in any row that is going on. Her daughters are ladies, their only hope being marriage.

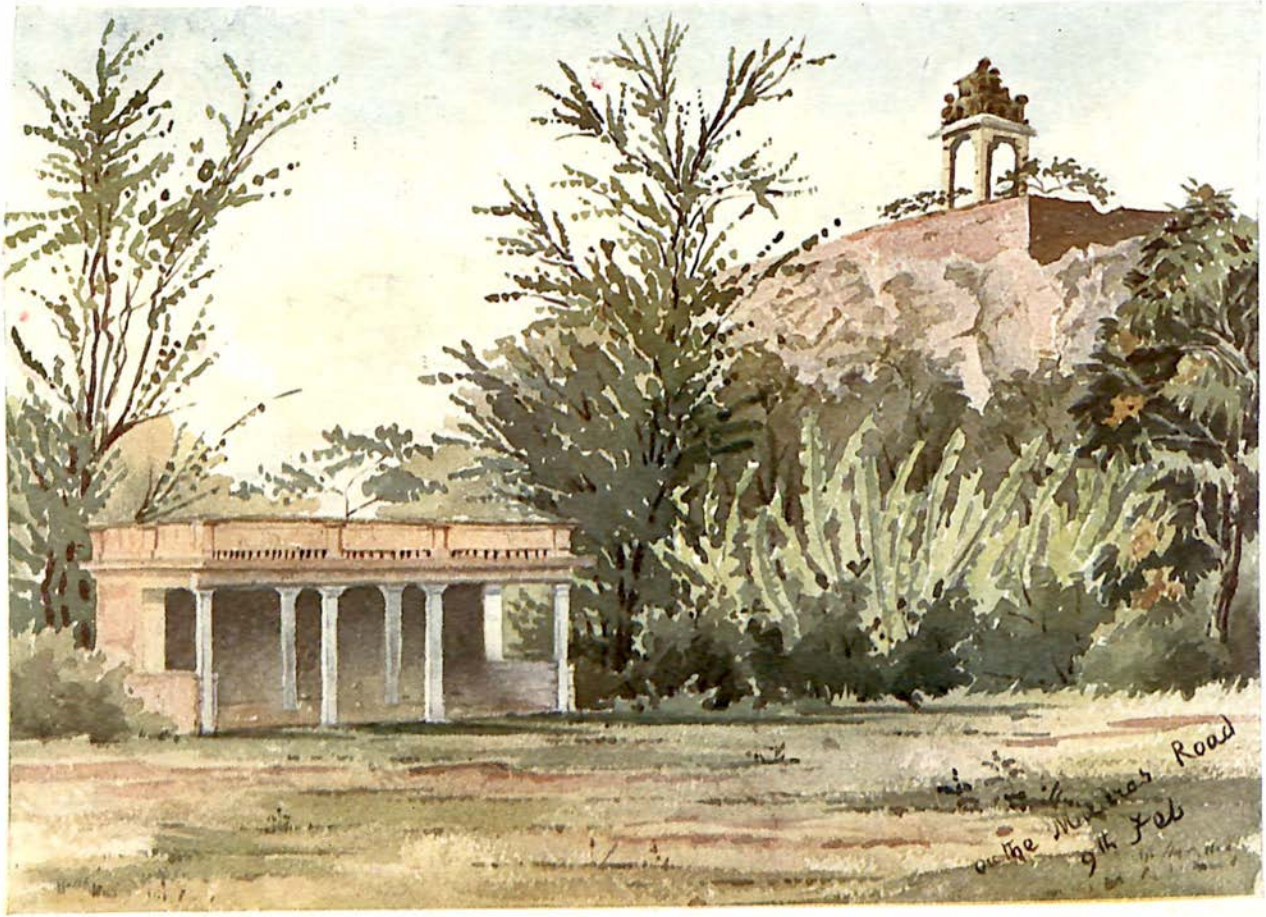
We visited twelve families, all with different stories, faces, and ideas. They had different names too, but these I got hopelessly mixed. They told us spicy little tales of each other. One lady was got up in a tea-gown, but some just out from England had not had time to acquire the fashionable, languid style, and

they talked sadly of home, ailing children, mosquito bites, and fever.

The different regiments had all just returned from manœuvres and sham battles, which had taken place miles away in the wilds. The officers were full of weird and uncanny tales; one of them had slept with a russels-viper, another with a scorpion. A general could stand the sun no longer, so came out in a thick layer of vinolia cream. You could hear his face frizzling in the heat, like a mutton chop on a frying-pan. Two soldiers had caught a huge python asleep, and had tied it up in a bag. Some one opened the bag to see what was inside, and the python jumping out routed the whole camp, which ran for miles.

On their return to Bangalore the army was kept very busy rehearsing how they would receive the Prince of Wales. They were up every day at dawn. Officers talked and argued, the men looked patiently on. Orders and counter-orders flew round. Wives were frantically engaged in getting their husbands' numerous uniforms into working trim.

Military men in India have a spring, summer, autumn, and winter uniform, besides a few others, and they have no end of bother settling which they are



AT BANGALORE

going to wear, for they are expected all to come out dressed alike.

Bangalore had metamorphosed itself in honour of the Prince. Even the tired horses nearly fainted with terror going under the uncanny monuments called arches. There were miles of paper flowers, and every house near the Residency had caught the decoration epidemic badly. Our steed shied from one gaudy pole to another. His zigzag motion was too exciting to be pleasant.

The Prince and Princess arrived early in the morning. Their railway carriages were lined with white silk, and had silver door-handles. The railway company, however, could not supply a cool night.

That afternoon we started early to see the unveiling of Queen Victoria's statue by the Prince of Wales. I drove with a lady who possessed a model horse. Our tickets procured us splendid seats just opposite the royal pavilion, a kind of cardboard imitation of Tippoo's Summer Palace. It was a gorgeous bit of colour, and a pleasure to contemplate. The sun shone full on us, as we sat blooming like a terrace of bright flowers. Beautiful Eastern creatures began to arrive and take their places on a stand. There

were blue, pink, and green stands. The Prince's native A.D.C.'s were a sight to comfort a gloomy heart. I counted seven of them — all different, all handsome. The local European magnates tripped to their places in the Moorish pavilion, and stretching away into the distance were millions of brilliantly dressed soldiers.

The Maharajah's brother drove up, but being the representative of an Oriental sovereign, he did not enter the cardboard palace, but stood outside in the sunshine for us to admire him. His turban of woven gold thread was ornamented by a standing plume of huge diamonds, and his tunic was such a dazzling mass that I could not analyse it. A pair of well-fitting patent-leather boots met the tunic, and one hand rested on a jewel-hilted sword. He stood out in the open, surrounded by his staff dressed in white calico, dignified and unembarrassed.

The native crowd were a patient, good-tempered lot. Most of them had been waiting since dawn. Hundreds climbed into the trees, but as the branches generally broke, they fell down and some confusion followed. Eventually they were packed away somewhere.

Natives never cheer. A groan like rumbling thunder greeted the Prince and Princess as they drove up in the

Residency carriage. He wore a white uniform, and the Princess was dressed completely in the same colour. I also noticed her handsome, sparkling, diamond necklace. She looked pale and tired.

The Prince was presented with some kind of an address in a carved box, and the Union Jack veiling the statue came down without a hitch. The statue I will not describe. It was like every other statue, and while the cannon fired a hundred and one times in salute, every one seemed to talk statue as if they had never seen one before.

The royal party left immediately for the Lal Bagh, and we were eventually able to extract ourselves from that scene of brilliantly coloured confusion.

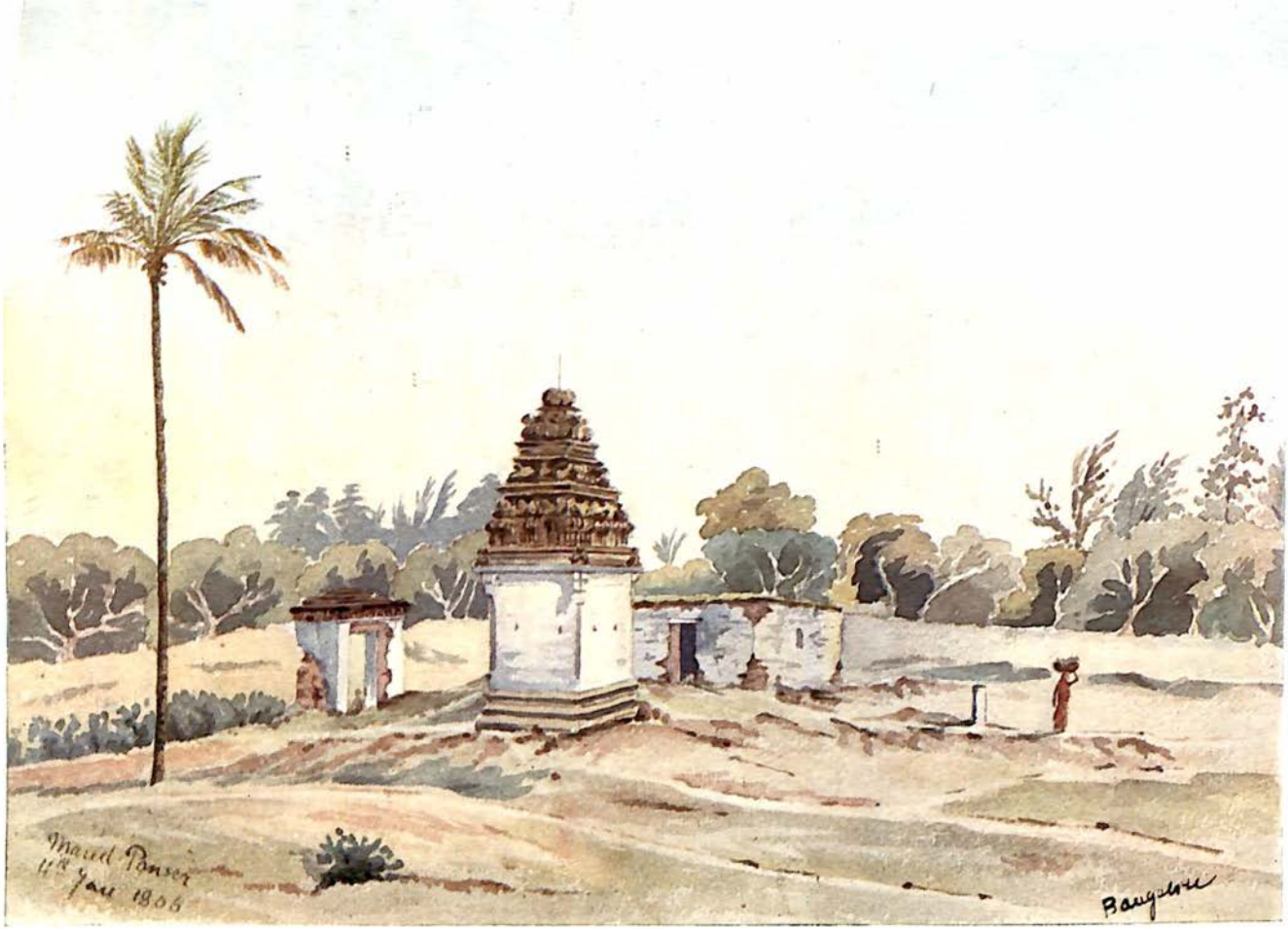
The Lal Bagh is a garden of many beautiful plants. It is quite flat. It is situated about six miles from Bangalore. In a corner there are some wild beasts in uncomfortable cages. There is also a huge tin pavilion. These did not strike me as necessary to the garden. The fertility of the place was amazing. Tangles of bamboo, with black, yellow, and orange stems, were to be seen, and a pergola on stone arches, covered with bougainvillier, &c. (&c. means the plants I did not know the names of). There were fine trees, and a hedge, four feet

high, of many-coloured crotons, hiding a wall ornamented by a red stone balustrade. One spot in the wood might have been taken for a scene in fairyland. Red sand paths, beaten hard, wound in and out under palms. Wonderful creepers, orchids, and ferns were clustered in dense masses everywhere; it only wanted a stray goblin to complete the scene.

At the entrance one sees a beautiful old ruined sacred bathing-place and temple; but indeed India is strewn with these remains. People hardly ever do away with them now, for the belief has gained ground that ill-luck will follow the man who interferes with them. The following is a true story:—

Three officers pulled down the tomb of a Hindu saint, which stood in the compound of a bungalow they were building. A fakir passing by cursed them, and said they would all die before the year came to an end. Sure enough, one of them was killed in a small frontier war, and the second died of a hurt received whilst playing polo. The third and last man was sitting at his club on New Year's eve, when a friend entered and congratulated him on still being alive. "So you have done the old fakir, after all?" said he.

"It seems so," answered the other, "but you must



HINDU SAINT'S TOMB, BANGALORE

remember that the curse holds good until twelve o'clock."

"If you are not afraid," said his friend, "come and dine with me, and we'll talk it over."

Some time later they left the club together, bound for a bungalow across the river. In sailing across, the boat they were in capsized, and the doomed man was drowned.

A species of tree growing nearly everywhere along the road took my fancy immensely. It is called the Cassirina, and has long, fine, green hair instead of leaves.

There are many pleasant drives in Bangalore. From a road running round Ulsoor Tank, one gets lovely views of trees, flowery banks, and also their reflection in the water. Then there is the high ground where people play golf, and where can be seen mountains rising out of the plain, hundreds of miles away.

On my return home, I found that Mrs. Fraser had kindly sent me an invitation for the reception held at the Residency by the Prince and Princess of Wales. I had just time to get dinner, dress, and drive off. I met a great crowd of friends in the cloak-room and long passages, where we talked and gossiped to our hearts'

content. When the doors of the reception-room were thrown open, I saw their Royal Highnesses standing at the far end. The Princess was dressed in white, and wore diamonds. I forget what the Prince had on.

Being asked by an A.D.C. for my card, I was told not to make too low a curtsey, but to hurry on and let tired Royalty get off to bed. We passed up the room in single file, and as our names were called, came forward, bowed, shook hands with the Prince and Princess, and left by another door.

Indian magnates did not appear to shake hands; they bowed, and kissed the tips of their fingers over the royal hand.

Many funny mistakes were made. I heard that the Prince was introduced to a queer character in Madras, whom I shall call Brown.

"Who is that Brown?" asked the King's son.

"Well, your Royal Highness," was the answer, "out here there is Curzon, Brown, and God Almighty."

The next day we had to be up early in order to see the Prince present a new standard to the carabineers at 8 A.M. As we sat in our carriage at the end of the maidan, an officer came and provided us all with a dear little book, explaining the whole show and giving

a sketch of the wars the old flag had been carried through. There were great numbers of natives, and two camels, appearing amongst the crowd, created more sensation than the Prince. Happily the riders were able to keep them quiet by allowing them to browse on the trees.

The Prince arrived punctually. He was mounted on a beautiful historic charger, kept entirely for such shows, and fed on bread and milk, as it has no teeth. However, it had model manners and a beautiful way of standing its legs out stiff as a rock. It will be worth stuffing when dead.

It was rather sad to see the carabineers march slowly off the ground with their old faded flag, while the band played "Auld Lang Syne." The Prince and his staff then dismounted, while the Bishop of Madras and the officiating chaplains blessed the new standard. The clergymen were in their robes, and wore sola topees. The soldiers sang the following hymn most beautifully :—

HYMN

"Brightly gleams our banner,
Pointing to the sky,
Cheering toilworn soldiers
On to victory.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

Ready for the warfare,
Gladly thus we pray,
And with hearts united,
Take our onward way.

Brightly gleams, &c.

"All our days direct us
In the way we go,
Lead us on to victories
Over every foe.
Bid thy angels shield us,
When the storm clouds lower,
Pardon, Lord, and save us
In the last dread hour.

Brightly gleams, &c. Amen."

The old flag was presented to the Prince, I believe, but this was only done privately. After the prayers were finished the Prince delivered an address and shook hands with the carabineer officers, who were introduced to him by the General. All was then over, and the crowd gradually melted away, intent on breakfast. The sunny morning had been pleasantly spent gossiping in each other's carriages.

Mrs. Fraser gave a garden-party, to which she kindly invited all Bangalore. We were to have the honour of meeting the Prince and Princess of Wales.

The red Residency building looked very handsome that

VIEW FROM THE HILL GROVE HOTEL, COONOOR

afternoon, standing surrounded by flowers, trees, and green grass.

In India any one can have trees and flowers, but only the representative of royalty can afford green grass.

The dresses worn were beautiful, though sometimes a little peculiar. A lady over fifty is not obliged to wear white silk muslin and pink roses in honour of the Prince of Wales.

There seemed a mile of canvas tent, under which was spread food, drink, silver, and flowers. A band played and people strolled about, happy to think their dresses were sweeping nice natural lawn, instead of collecting a waggon-load of the usual fearful red dust.

After tea the Prince and Princess (dressed in white, with a stray touch of black here and there) walked about talking to those who had been introduced to them.

When the sun ceased to shine too brightly, the military contingent changed their white sola topees for caps of the same colour. This is the etiquette. I unconsciously cut several acquaintances after this transformation, for nothing alters a man's appearance so much as his hat.

Next day a portion of the excitement caused by

the Prince and Princess had faded away. Bangalore took down its decorations, and began to talk about the hot weather. There is not much hot weather at Bangalore, but many people pass a couple of months in the hills, spending their time getting wet at night, and drying their things off all day in the sun, for I believe it rains often in the hills.

One afternoon I rode a camel. I did it to realise what it was like, and found it truly awful. You mount while the animal is lying down, and are then quite happy and comfortable, but when it takes up its hind legs, it shoots you over its head, and when it takes up its front legs you fly off over its tail. I forget which pair of legs come up first. My ride was quite spoilt by the thought of what would happen when the creature sat down again. The animal also had a long, dislocating, silent kind of action, and terrified me greatly by pumping up water from its hump to drink.

While at Bangalore I took many sketches. I was generally the centre of an admiring crowd, whose behaviour filled me with admiration. They stood behind and talked in whispers, allowing no one to get in my way. The coolie girls refused to raise a dust-storm with their little brooms in my vicinity. If a man thought

I was introducing him into my drawing, he would wait patient and motionless for hours, until he saw my gaze directed elsewhere.

There was a children's *fête* I remember, which rather amused me. It wound up with some splendid fireworks, which terrified the babies, who had to be removed by their mothers and soothed. I suppose it was frightening to see the butler running about under an exploding, blazing umbrella.

A poor broken-down European in one corner tried to attract attention towards his stupid little tricks. Most likely he had been engaged out of charity. There is no sadder sight than an Englishman in the East, on the last rung of the ladder.

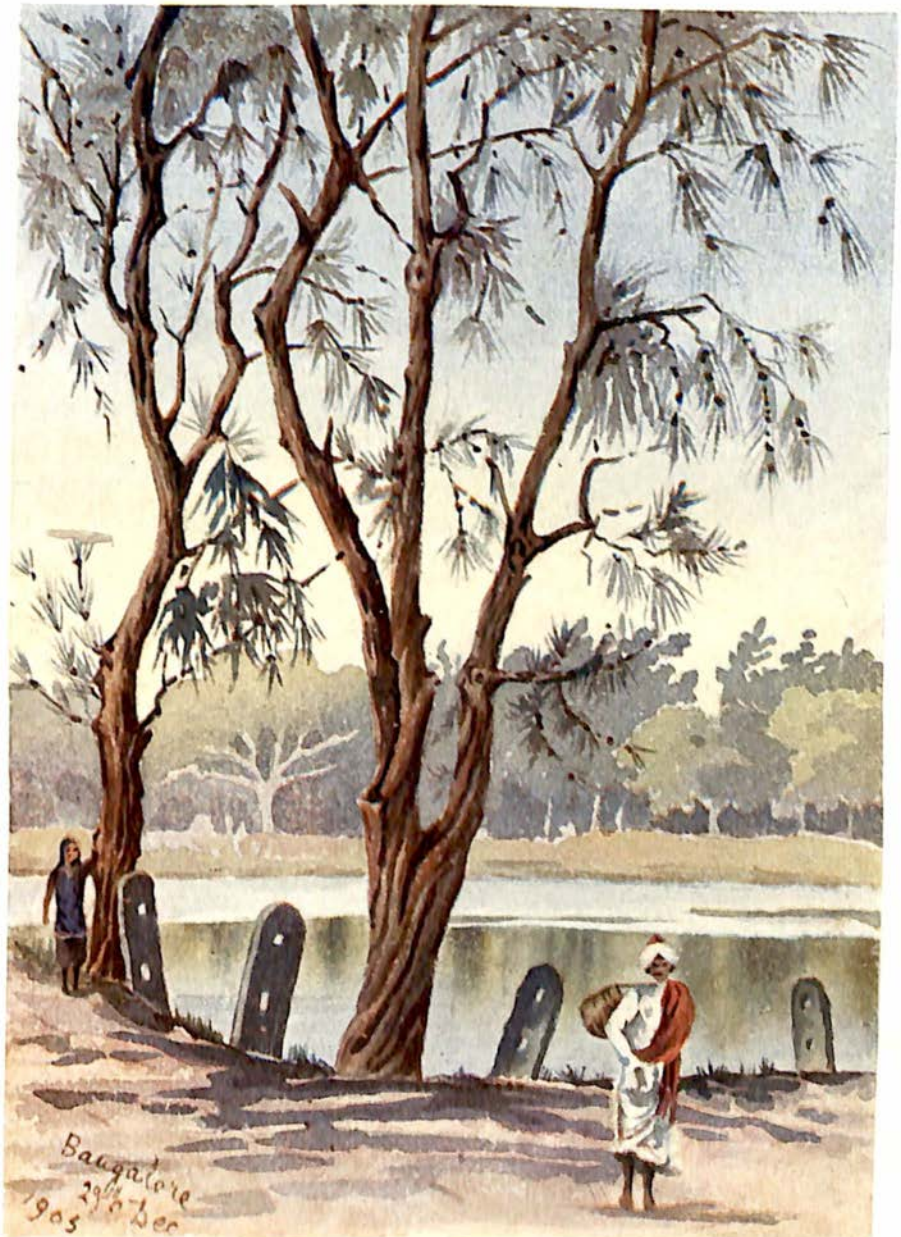
The native conjurers were entrancingly clever and energetic. One man beat a small drum. Another played a queer monotonous tune on a kind of flat flute, and danced with strings of bells strung about his ankles. The cobras were coiled around, nodding their heads in enjoyment of that one-note tune, and one-step dance. I was allowed to take hold of the large rock snakes, which are quite harmless. In the basket were also some pretty grass-vipers, which resembled a piece of bright green silk cord.

A planter told me the following interesting tale about some snake-charmers. He had been very much bothered by snake-men and a large cobra in his plantation, so one day, when the former arrived as usual, he refused to allow their performance, but promised to pay them double if they charmed the serpent off his premises. The professionals reluctantly consented, and after strumming and dancing for an hour, finally captured the cobra and carried it away in their basket. They were, however, trembling all over, and evidently had had no end of a bad time. Although well paid for the job, they returned no more to that planter's home.

When the men and the cobras got tired of their performance, a large boy was put into a small basket and the showman proceeded to drive a sword through the wickerwork, very carefully, for fear of damaging the basket. When he took to eating fire and hanging rocks on strings to his eyelids, until they bulged out like eggs, we came away.

There was a merry-go-round. I heard a little child ask a fat, good-natured lady to put him on a horse. Just as the machine was set in motion, the little one shrieked, "Don't let me go! Don't let me go!"

The lady lost her head, and, in terror, raced round



MILLERS TANK, BANGALORE

clinging to the child. The showman was so upset between laughter and amazement, that he did not stop the affair for some time.

One day while sketching on the maidan, where the cattle grazed on dust, a large black and white goat took a fancy to me. It followed me home, running around bleating, and would have nothing to say to the relations it met on the way. It also avoided every native woman.

I never longed to possess anything so much, and if only I had had a home, I should have bought or stolen that animal.

One morning some workpeople arrived to make new matting for the bungalow. They wove it to fit the rooms, squatting on the floor, and using flat reeds from the lake, which they kept damp. The pattern was quite pretty; a sort of endless W.

A man in the bazaar also made a carpet for my friend. It was very cheap, and coloured a pretty green, which came off on the edge of her white dresses and soiled them, as damp grass does in this country.

She also got some beds made. Happily I left before they were ready for use, but I heard terrible accounts of them. I am sure they were stuffed with chopped cocoa-

nut shells. Natives are fond of supplying this kind of restful bedding to Europeans. They recommend it as cheap and cool.

I received the following amusing letter from the butler, commemorating his daughter's marriage :—

"To the Very Benevolent Lady.

"Madam,—Most Benevolent Madam,—In humble recognition of your Benevolence; Godly love, and Heavenly disposition in assurance with the Divine love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I, most supplicantly with full assurance, and profound faith in your benign commisseration.

"With the hope Established by God our Redeemer, 'Ask and it shall be given unto you' Beg to bring to your gracious knowledge the sacred cause, which I have taken in Hand, namely, the marriage of my Daughter within the current month, and with the hope and consolation, that, this Sacred purpose, had been endowed with our Lord and Master's with his blessings, and by the Honour of his presence at the marriage of Cana of Galilee, by which he demonstrated the power of His Godhead thereby depicting that His boundless blessings will be unlimittatingly conferred on those who followed, His Holy pattern in aiding the propagation of the Sacred and Divine Law.

"I most Humbly; profoundly and Supplicantly appeal to you, as, my Divine Benefactress and Heaven's Trustee for a little pecuniary help for the accomplishment of

this Sacred purpose, as I have no other 'Helper' to appeal to.

"For which unparalleled act of kindness and Heavenly Benediction the Blessing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Come, ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world will be with love bestowed on you.—I beg to remain, Most Benevolent Madam, Yr Humble servant,

"BUTLER LAZZAAR."

I think this letter is a good sample of the native English. They talk a traditional language which has been handed down from father to son. It is not what we speak, but if one takes time and thinks deeply, a sort of sense gets conveyed to the understanding by it.

Many auctions take place at Bangalore. People come and people go. It is a resting-place for birds of passage. So furniture gets shifted round.

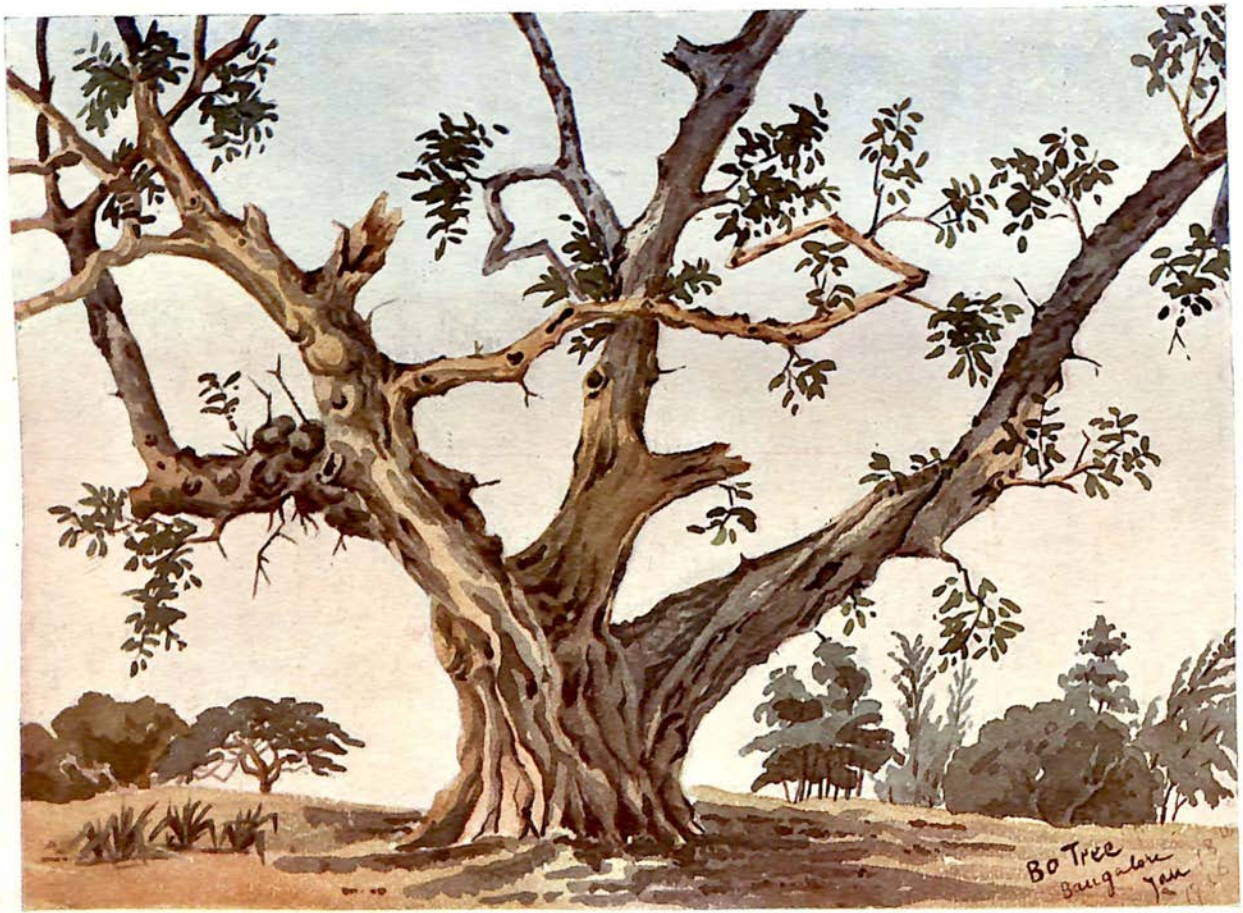
Few set up house with an utterly brand-new stock of goods. I attended many such sales, and found the medley of humanity a most attractive study. Some things seemed ridiculously cheap until you got them home on a coolie's head for a few annas, when discrepancies came to light. On first arriving at Bangalore, it astonished me to see a large bedstead or press trotting down the road on the heads of four native men or women. Most furniture is

made of teak, because the white ant does not eat it, if anything else is at hand. Trees are protected from these troublesome insects by placing rings of tar round them, for otherwise these destructive little creatures make clay runs over them, and under these tunnels burrow and eat away the wood. If the roof comes down, or the leg of a chair gives way, you may be sure the white ant has been tramping around. They do not attack humanity, but when disturbed during the daytime will hide themselves down under the skin, making a terrible wound.

Natives always bid for old saucepans, or kitchen tables. They run up the price of these articles to such an extent that people find it cheaper to buy them new. Sheffield plate, however, can be had for a song. It looks but poor stuff in a country where solid silver is only used.

Flower auctions take place early, before breakfast, and are a very pretty sight. English plants alone fetch any price. To us fresh from England, they looked pale, sickly things. They are carefully reared in pots, which are made at the bazaar and cost almost nothing.

Bullocks with little hooded carts wait round to carry the purchases home for the buyer. You have to pay the owners beforehand, and generally four times their legiti-



BO TREE, BANGALORE

mate hire, for the demand on such occasions exceeds the supply.

The roses growing almost wild in England, become mildewed, weedy bushes at Bangalore, and flower themselves to death unless carefully pruned. But the Briton cares for nothing else, and wastes all his gardening energy on them for the sake of auld lang syne.

I was introduced to a native sapper who had been wounded while fighting for us during the Mutiny. One hand was shot off, and his arm much injured. The Government allowed him four rupees a month, but as he expressed it, "He was much hungry, with plenty children."

CHAPTER VII

THE BLUE HILLS

WHEN we speak of Paradise, the thoughts of those living in Southern India wander away to the Blue Hills. They are called Nilgiri, or blue, after little flowers which bloom on the slopes. They resemble an ageratum, and at a distance have the appearance of a veil of coloured chiffon spread on the ground.

I started for the hills before the season had commenced, and decided to stop at Coonoor, which is warmer than Ootacamund (nicknamed Ooty). I left Bangalore after dinner, and travelled through the hot plains in a comfortable carriage during the cool hours of the night. I now understood Indian travelling, and always took plenty of pillows, rugs, tumblers, and soda-water. It is a mistake to forget a bottle-opener, for one spills half the liquid trying to push down the little glass ball with one's umbrella. In the East nobody drinks plain water, for you never know how many generations old the liquid may be, or what germs are living in it. I heard of an

officer who caught enteric from washing his teeth with the water found in a train. Every one prefers to drink a kind of aerated water, for which you pay twopence if the bottle is returned. The numerous natives travelling quench their thirst for the tenth part of a farthing. "Pāni, pāni," they cry, and a man runs to fill their drinking-pots from the water-skin he carries under his arm. But they die young.

Since visiting India I begin to understand why the Hindus are great vegetarians. It is not so much that the vegetables are good, as that the meat is horrible. How can it be otherwise? costing only twopence per pound. Game has no flavour, and a chicken is eaten soon after it is hatched. The white buffalo butter, though tasting all right, resembles candle-grease. Meals would be a sad failure if it were not for the drink, for it is thirst, and not hunger, one suffers from; and think of it—every mouthful of liquid swallowed costs money, and is liable to make you fat. A gentleman I met saw a lovely young woman's figure ruined in a month by sipping iced water.

I was awakened at Jalarpet Junc. by a black lady dressed in white. She was attached to the medical profession in some way or other, and wanted to see my

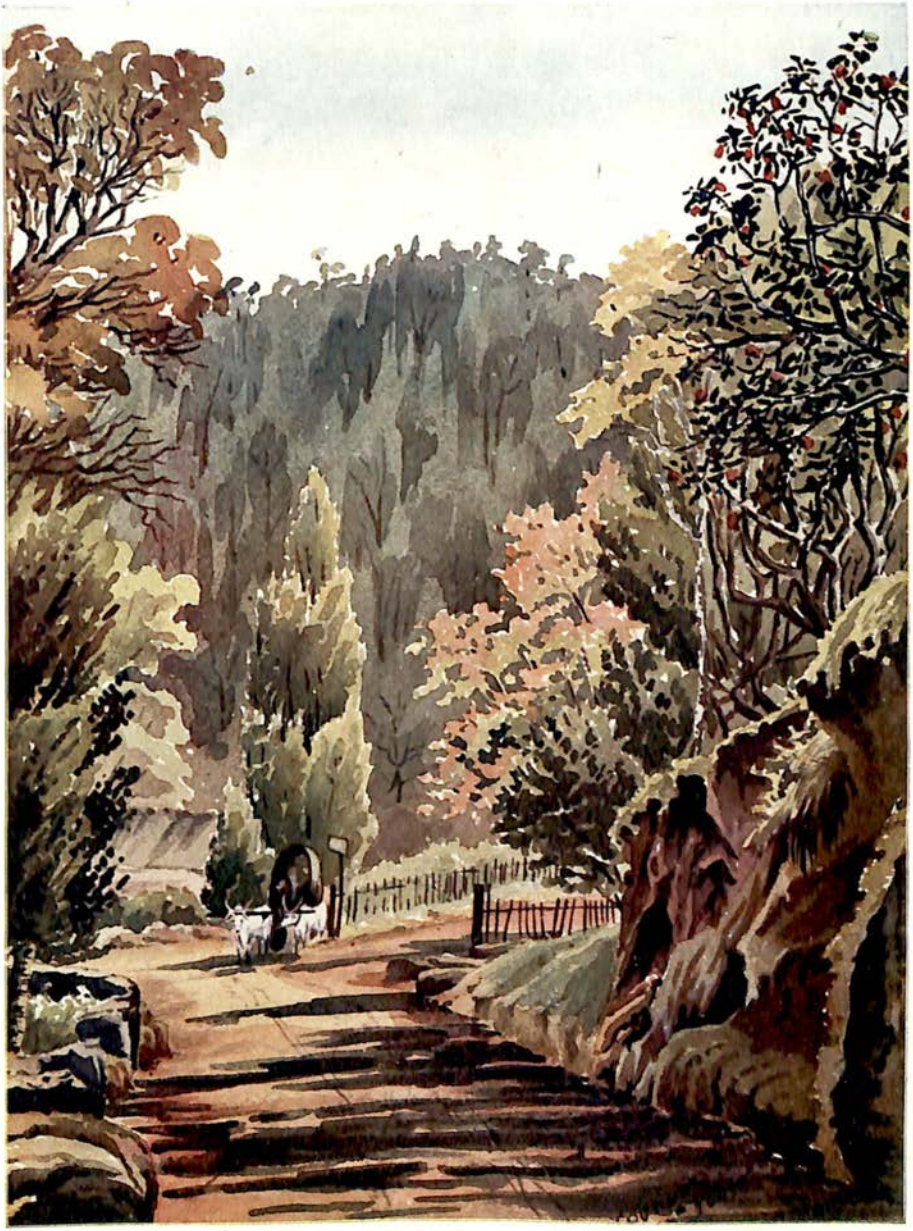
plague certificate. I had none, so she took my name and address.

At Bombay and Bangalore they have grown hopeless and despairing before this terrible disease, but the rest of India still labours under the idea that they will be able to stamp it out, so travellers' lives are rendered a burden to them by passports and health officers.

I was kept well awake for an hour at Jalarpet, where the native passengers were all drawn up in line on the platform. A lady doctor examined the women by feeling for swellings under the arms, whilst a medical gentleman did the same for the male flitter. Their inspection did not pass off quietly, the jabbering and arguing would have awakened the dead.

I felt fully roused and hungry, and was quite ready for my tea, which I was able to get at Erode Junc. at 4 A.M. Tea, beautifully made, and hot, crisp toast—all for fourpence. When I think of that tea I have to own that some Indian meals were enjoyable.

When day dawned I was able to amuse myself looking out at the red sandy plains dotted with scraps of agricultural industry. There were hedges of aloe and prickly pear, the latter covered with yellow flowers and red fruit. Where the soil suited, toddy palms stood out



COONOOR, NILGIRI HILLS

against the sky. Cacti grew tall like rhododendrons. Scattered about were stone wells and water-holes in the rocks to catch the rain. The trees were queerly shaped, having at some time or other been robbed of their branches to feed the cattle. I saw women cutting off the aloe leaves and bringing them away in baskets. What for, I wonder? Surely not to feed the cows?

At the stations picturesque native families were grouped about, waiting for the train.

Towards nine o'clock the Blue Hills came into sight. Many beautiful little temples were to be seen, some of them spoilt by a coat of whitewash. In places the country was green like Ireland, with patches of sugar-cane, rice plantations, and mimosa. At Mettupaliayam, where we changed to the hill railway, a beautiful breakfast, costing only one rupee, awaited us. Punkahs waved the whole time, for it is both hot and unhealthy at the foot of the mountains.

All our luggage was weighed and charged for, as, owing to the cost incurred in making the railway, it is one of the most expensive in India. The train in my time only ran as far as Coonoor, but eventually it meant to struggle on to Ooty, 8000 feet above sea-level. During the monsoon most of the line gets washed

away and the bridges become dangerous, but with the return of fine weather, and after a few repairs, the trains start running again as happily as ever.

To ascend the Nilgiris is an experience. There are lovely views and plenty of noise. We went dead slow, the little engine puffing and snorting behind. The hook falling into the rack-rail made a fearful clatter, which echoes imitated. Each carriage had a man to manage the brakes—such a poor, ragged man he was! One of them presented me with a rose. I saw him steal it most cleverly from the stationmaster's garden. In this way they often earn a penny.

The views were beautiful as the train came round the base of the mountains, but when it began to eat its way into the heart of the hill, the scenery, so to speak, swept you off your feet. Unprotected curved iron bridges, springing from stone arches, wound over valleys where you looked down on a tangle of bamboo forest. This was the land of vegetation; in every rocky hole grew ferns, seedums, and quaint grasses, whilst everywhere and anywhere the little blue nilgiri blossom flowered its life away. The different tiny stations along the line were perfect bowers of roses, heliotrope, and geraniums.

It took three hours getting to Coonoor. Post-horses do not take longer, but the train is more comfortable, less tiring, and nothing can surpass the lovely view passengers get from the front windows of the railway carriage.

In the valley of a mountain river stands Coonoor Station. The bazaar is close by, and here a fair is held every Wednesday, when the whole native population from the surrounding villages make a terrible din over their marketing. I was amused to see cheap, gaudy chromos of the Hindu gods. Somehow that style of art did not seem to suit their rather peculiar type of beauty. A fine pair of horses swung my victoria very quickly up a terrible hill as steep as the side of a house. Two stately white bullocks plodded slowly behind with my luggage. I remarked that many of them were broken-winded. Descending hills, the driver fastens a pole close to the wheels of a cart to act as a brake. I have seen better inventions. It makes a terrible noise, and that is about all the use it is.

There were three hotels at Coonoor. One was called Glenview, where you might go if you happened to be a Protestant, for it stands on a hill near the fine old Protestant Church. The Hillgrove is near the Catholic

Chapel, and Grey's Hotel between both religious institutions.

I went to the Hillgrove Hotel, I suppose because I was a Catholic. The board came to two hundred rupees a month, no extras; even a fire of eucalyptus wood being included for that sum.

Coonoor was quite a new sensation. I had wall-paper, carpet, curtains, and a fireplace in my bedroom, opening on to a verandah, from which I could hear birds really singing, and water falling into the valley below. By the path were hedges of heliotrope, geranium, and roses, and up the slopes in front grew eucalyptus, orange-trees, and huge deodars. Hurlikal Drug, a grand bluff, and the spire of a fine old church could be seen through an opening in the wood.

I passed such a peaceful night, without the usual million of barking dogs. I had a bed, too, which possessed real blankets and a quilt, and had not been stuffed with sticks. I required no mosquito-net, which I reckoned a blessing. The sensation of sleeping under a mosquito-net or in a meat-safe is the same. I was also fed on food the like of which I had not seen before —meat with a shade of fat here and there, and which had been allowed to hang a day, potatoes boiled, and

possessing really a faint flavour, besides other vegetables, and chickens fully grown.

A beer is made on the hills called Nilgiri beer, which tastes like Bass's ale. On a line with my room, and opening on to the same verandah, were other bed-chambers and a draughty dining and sitting room. I generally wore my coat here, as the air felt keen after the heat of the plains, and although the sun shone as warm as ever, there was no red dust or glare, but shading trees, hedges of pink roses, primrose-coloured mimosa, and clumps of datura in full bloom by the roadside.

I did not think it worth while trying to become a member of the club during my short stay, but I joined the library. It was a fine new building, and on its shady balconies I could see the distant mountains, or the English newspaper, besides being allowed any books I chose to carry home. Those great, cool, well-stocked reading-rooms will always remain to me a pleasant memory.

It was entrancing to explore, wandering round by queer roads always going either up or down hill. There was a zigzag and figure-of-eight road. In the centre of the last dwelt a seller of all things. He had spent

much of his life in India, and was delighted to converse with customers willing to dawdle. He lived in a large, flowery house over the way, but "did not get his health in the hills." This is the common complaint of people who spend their lives amongst them.

Prices here were not the same as in England. Matches were cheap, and announced that they were made in Sweden. You would not care to carry the amount that could be had for a penny. On the other hand a tooth-brush was worth its weight in gold, and I was not rich enough to buy needles, but fortunately I had brought a supply from home with me.

The chemist mended my trunk for a few annas, but he sent me to Scott Smith, carriage-builder, carpenter, and undertaker, to have my sketching-stool put in order. I thought that such a busy man would not condescend to such a small job, but when I found him camping out in a shed on the side of a hill, I had courage to ask. He also only charged a trifle, although a printed board hanging nailed to a post on the road stated what a wonderful person he was.

A carriage in which to potter about Coonoor could be hired for six rupees a day. A rickshaw cost much less, but then one walked a great deal more.

LOVERS' ROAD, COONOOR

It went to a person's heart to see two poor, tired, thin men hauling them along.

It was pleasant roaming about sketching, and strolling through the woods, finding all kinds of lovely flowers and shrubs. I was astonished to see native men, women, and children running down the roads with great heavy loads of firewood on their heads, generally twenty-four feet long, and under this terrible weight they fled along barefooted, often taking short cuts over broken ground.

Firing in the hills has become cheap since eucalyptus trees have been planted. They grow quickly, and after being cut down, set to and shoot up again.

Close to the river throve a dhobie settlement. The country about absolutely blossomed with clothes drying. My things were beautifully washed, particularly articles made of white silk. Scattered around were curious native churchyards, full of quaint tombs resembling toy houses built by children. Little heaps of ashes lying in them, showed that fires had been lighted. There was no time to go deeply into the hill tribe religion. I took a sketch of one of their temples. It had an ornamental roof, whilst imperfectly drawn animals were painted on the plain white walls. The religious cere-

monies were noisy and rather primitive. A fire having been lighted inside the building, the congregation all run around outside. No one seemed to attend to the fire, yet there was no end of a fuss if it went out.

I met but one terrible creature at Coonoor. It was a large, hairy spider the size of a plum-pudding. I first saw it at church sitting in a pew. I knelt elsewhere, so did everybody else. The spider had that pew all to himself for the whole service. Sometime after I found another specimen on my bedroom wall. I pulled all my things out into the middle of the floor, left the bath-room door open, and sat at a distance waiting for it to go away. I would rather try and kill a tiger than a big spider. I never had perfect rest in my room after that.

People came and went, but an invalid planter from the jungle stayed at the hotel nearly as long as myself. I found him most entertaining at meals, as he knew so much about the country and its people, living as he had done a kind of little king in some wild spot. He talked sadly of his coffee, an uncertain crop, sold by him the worker for fourpence per pound, and by the idle man in London at two-and-eight, but I suppose it will always be so to the world's end.

Planters get real good shooting during the holiday

season, and none show strangers better sport or receive so little gratitude for their kindness.

Coffee is a pretty crop, planted under silver oak-trees. It has dark green leaves and white flowers. Tea is hideous. The side of the mountain on which it grows is shaved bare of vegetation, while the ugly little pruned green bushes stand in rows like cabbages.

For ten days or so after my arrival, the health officer came regularly to see if I still lived. He told me gruesome tales of plague. Ooty is taking every precaution to keep it out, since they have it in the town. The story runs that some infected rats imparted the plague germs to bags of meal, from which the inhabitants took the disease.

Sometime after I arrived it rained—such rain! The houses have three rows of tiles, tin roofs, and covered chimneys, and still the people cannot always keep the interiors dry. All day and all night it poured, the natives walked about under their ever-open umbrellas. They make the frame of the umbrella from bamboo, and thatch it with reeds. It is a beautiful article, but it must take a lot of space to store it away during the fine weather.

I was sketching one day near a bridge, and saw some

children herding cows. A big boy was unkind to a little fellow, who began to weep bitterly, and came near me for protection. I gave him a penny. The next day, when he saw me, he left the merry game he was playing and, sitting down near me, began his sad lament, but I had no penny this time.

I once went to the post-office to buy some stamps, and was given a rupee in coppers, not in annas, but in those kind of coppers that fit four half-pennies into a penny. If you hire a coolie to carry a heavy trunk, his charge is twopence; he expects the same for bringing a letter to the post. Residents complain that travellers have raised the prices, but no tourist can afford to keep an elephant to carry sacks of copper about with him, so he loads himself with little silver pieces value two annas, and is told he has raised the market price.

One day I started down to the station to meet some Bangalore friends who were coming to pay me a visit. I could hear the train creaking up through the valley, but it took me only a few minutes to run down through the wood. One had to run, for the hills were so steep it was impossible to walk. After paying the ninth part of a farthing for a ticket, I was allowed on the platform. There were plenty of carriages waiting about, and the

tonga stood ready to be off to Ooty, the hardy little ponies resting while they could. My friends arrived, and were pounced upon by the plague department. They brought terrible accounts of the heat at Bangalore. It was hotter than usual, worse than other years, &c., but I suppose it is always so.

On my way home I ordered a tonga from the Nilgiri Hill Co.'s stables to take three of us next day to Ooty, where the short time at our disposal was to be spent with mutual friends. We all revelled in the nice cool evening. As we sat chatting on the verandah, a bright moon was shining and showing off the beauties of the valley at our feet.

The tonga arrived punctually next day at nine o'clock. It is an Indian conveyance peculiar to the hills; a sort of two-wheeled dogcart, having over it a fixed canvas roof supported by iron bars. Two horses are driven; they gallop the whole time, and have to be changed every five miles. The pole running through the carriage is fastened to a peculiarly high straddle, to which the traces are also attached. There is no collar. The motion of a tonga is wildly exciting, and also extremely exhausting. You feel all the vagaries of the animals, and when stretching your head out to see the view, the hood

generally bangs your hat down over your eyes. It has also an Irish jaunting-car's capacity for dropping passengers' property along the road. No coachman comes out alone; another man is there to bury him if necessary. None but Hindus, fearless of death, could drive the wild, half-broken hill colts. One pair of ours kept continually fighting each other on the edge of precipices.

A native syce has no equal; none dare attempt his methods to force the pace. He rarely uses the brake, but allows the weight of the machine to push his tired horses sliding down the hill; going up he gallops them, shaking every one in the carriage to a jelly. In twelve miles we had sampled the tempers and peculiarities of six horses and three coachmen. We were weary and our nerves completely shattered on arrival.

Studying Ooty from a map, an idea grows on one that it is a handy little place in the Dodabetta range of hills. You picture a walk round the lake, tea at a cake-shop, and calling to see friends as a pleasant little stroll. Undertake these apparently simple things, however, and you soon realise your mistake. To get round the lake takes half a day, and to mount a hill means an excursion. However, the views are beautiful, differing from those of Coonoor where the hills tower above you, as here they stretch away below.

TEMPLE, COONOOR

The climate is cool, with a fryingly hot sun through the day, though in the evening people find it necessary to have wood fires all the year round.

The plague commissioners stopped us on entering Ooty, but they do not trouble Europeans much as they are considered more or less immune. We drove into the town down a broad, smooth road arched over with huge dark old trees. It was a lovely bit of scenery. Arums flowered in the fields, and agapanthus amongst the stones. There were heliotrope hedges four feet broad, while men were mending the ditches with old geraniums. They keep pelargoniums to fence the pleasure grounds. Sweet peas grow eight feet high. You require a ladder to pick a bunch of flowers.

At Ooty there are some hotels and a pastry-cook. The latter is a great person. The Governor of Madras once complained to him about the largeness of his bill.

The man answered: "Do you think, your Excellency, that I came 'ere for my 'ealth?"

A fellow whose sayings get repeated like this is bound to be somebody some day.

One morning I went to the top of a mountain for a stroll. It seemed quite near. I returned at nightfall

weary and fatigued, for the top of that mountain had not been so near as it seemed.

People who keep carriages cannot use them to go on excursions to see the country, for their horses are only just able to drag the vehicles up and down the hills on necessary business.

One day we all went down a lane to see a Toda settlement. The Todas live generally amongst the sholas of a valley. A shola is the primeval forest of the hills. It is not a forest at all, but just tiny, scrubby trees with little branches that knock your hat off. The Todas seem a nice, merry people, but I thought their looks had been overrated in my guide-book.

I saw their cathedral, which appeared to be a thatched shed. They worship, I believe, a pan of milk. Women marry all the brothers of a family, and kill their female infants for fear of there being too many old maids. They support themselves by rearing cattle in the mountains, but since they have discovered their own mercantile value as curiosities, they collect bakshish from visitors.

The roads round Ooty are beautiful, but after a time the steepness of those hills would get on your nerves and wear out any constitution. Children, too, sprout up like the English plants, and often grow themselves into a decline.

We found a poor young crow lying on the road, having just fallen out of its nest. The native boys were not attempting to injure it as little true-born Britons would have done, and they quite approved of our placing it in a place of safety near the parents' home.

Even in the hills wise people wear a sola topee, but it is not *de rigueur* to don a bright blue gauze veil and a sun-hat lined in emerald green, a combination so many people seem fond of.

When men and women talk of the hunting at Ooty, tears of regret for pleasures fled come into their eyes. Yet the sport only consists of tearing up and down hill after a set of poor, home-sick hounds. The meet takes place at 5 A.M., and if you wish to live and hunt another day, gallop straight down the precipices as a stone would roll. Whalers, Australian horses, last best in an Indian climate, but their withers are high for a lady's saddle The foxhound feels the heat terribly, the dry, dusty ground and want of scent ruining his hunting instinct. Dogs also catch every disease, and invariably die young. In the plains they are almost useless, and collapse at once.

Good shooting is to be had some distance from Ooty. Sportsmen, their wives, and friends camp out in the wilds

and kill all kinds of things. I heard of a large hunting party living in tents who were just sitting down to breakfast one morning when a swarm of bees arrived. Those bees were evidently no joke, being, most likely, an improvement on the English bee just as the Coonoor spider is a tropical cultivation of the British animal. The scene following that invasion beggars description. Clothed and valiant Englishmen rushed to the rescue of their poor, almost naked servants; then everybody, tired, hungry, and stifling, rolled themselves in canvas, where they remained until the bees took their departure. No one died, but none of them will easily forget that terrible day.

Ooty is cool, but it is as well to be careful there. The lake was thought unwholesome, so on this account half of it was filled up and made into a gymkhana ground. People playing tennis there are liable to catch enteric, while sitting out without a wrap gives you cold, influenza, double pneumonia, and consumption. Yet people love Ooty. It is pleasant to live all one's life and not slowly fry through six hours of the day.

We returned to Coonoor late one afternoon, on the backward journey, the scenery seeming much more beautiful. Perhaps it was because the tonga hood got less in our way going down hill. Near a posting stable we saw

OOTACAMUND

a cart full of green mimosa branches; we were told they were for the horses, "who much like green grass." Poor things! We passed the cordite factory where gunpowder for the army is manufactured, and rattled through Wellington, that haven of refuge for sick soldiers. We had fewer animals and coachmen on the return journey, for it is easier to drop into a valley than to climb a mountain.

CHAPTER VIII

LAST DAYS IN THE NILGIRI HILLS

When we decided to take a trip to Kotagiri, we settled not to have another tonga. A man in the neighbourhood kept ordinary four-wheeled victorias and strong horses, so we made up our minds they would be good enough for us. People told terrible tales of steeds in four-wheeled conveyances getting tired and breaking down, and having to snail home with everybody walking behind, but the road to Kotagiri is not all up hill, and I implored the man to give us plenty of relays.

He said one change was sufficient, as the animals were well fed up and rested for the coming season. Under these conditions the burden of the day was borne by a fine pair of greys, and a driver even more splendidly reckless than the men who had driven us before. The road, too, was fearful, most of it a narrow track little more than the width of our carriage, with no protection or trees, but simply a

fern between us and eternity. If anything came in sight a mile away, arrangements had to be made for meeting and letting it by. Our driver walked his horses up the hills, and galloped them down, the victoria swinging and swaying round the corners at the bottom near the unprotected edge of the precipice. A thoughtful person sometimes left a stone out in the road to prevent carriages taking too sharp a turn. It was an extremely delicate attention, but I should have preferred a wall.

I daresay the scenery of grassy hills was fine, but I did not look at them much, being fascinated by the terrible dangers that surrounded me. I fervently hoped there were no stones for the horses to tread upon during those breakneck gallops. It was fearful to contemplate what would happen if they stumbled.

On first leaving Coonoor our road had run through romantic, ferny dells and past a planter's home, the bare hills around dotted with his ugly little tea-bushes, the necessary picturesque native settlement of every plantation nestling cosily by. There were golf-links, too, in the wilds.

After leaving civilisation behind, our driver flung precaution to the winds and began to exhibit his

power of inspiring terror and admiration. It seemed a long twelve miles. At last, a clump of trees appearing on the bare hills, we joyfully felt that Kotagiri was near, but it took us some time to reach it, as we had to zigzag round another mountain or two. We swept through a little village by a stream, past hedges of red geraniums in flower, and a species of white tasconia blooming everywhere.

Passing up the winding road to the hotel, we caught a lovely peep of distant hills, which later on I sketched. The carriage stopped in front of the Blue Mountain Hotel, named after the view, and here we ordered luncheon and strolled round.

The bedrooms were clean and bare, with shaky door-fastenings, and sitting-rooms of their own, opening on to the verandah. There was more style about the hotel management than one usually finds in the hills. We heard later that the proprietor was a town German swell, who, falling ill, had removed his establishment to the breezy downs in search of health.

Kotagiri stands at the head of a ravine. From an elevation called One Tree Hill, a fine, misty view of the plains of India can be had. They resemble the sea in a haze.

THE BLUE MOUNTAINS, KOTAGIRI

Rows of huge wattle grow on the slopes. The wattle is a most fascinating tree. It begins life covered with green fingers, which eventually change into mimosa leaves, and later on great yellow blooms appear. I brought home some seed, but nothing came of it.

Out here there is always a One Tree Hill; climb it if you can, the view obtained from the top will repay the trouble.

At Coonoor that hill was too high for me, and the tree being so far away people could not make out what it was. A gentleman I know went up, and he said the view was really grand, and that the object in the distance was a tree, and not a flag-staff.

Many people prefer Kotagiri to the other hill stations. Lord Dalhousie, once Governor-General, always went there for his health; but I liked Coonoor best, it was more snug and shady.

The hill ponies proper are wretched little animals. One can be hired for eightpence a day, but I do not see what use they would be. Worked soon after they are born, and badly fed, some seem barely able to walk. To do the people justice, they appear only to lead them about loaded with a rain-coat and umbrella.

A planter once took them in hand, for they are hardy, and might make good transport ponies, but the venture did not pay, so the matter dropped. The native prefers a cheap, narrow-chested animal that cannot walk.

There were gardens on the side of a hill at Coonoor, called Sim's Park. At the bottom of that hill there was a lake in which almost everything grew. I noticed the lotus, tree-fern, reeds, arums, water-lilies, agapanthus, and other plants. Close by was a tea-house, and little bridges. All day long picturesque natives spent their time dipping pretty little pots into the water, their reflections blooming in the lake. On the slopes grew trees, wonderful specimens from all parts of the world. I admired particularly a narrow-leafed eucalyptus, a giant covered with bunches of feathery white flowers. The only objection against Sim's Park was the hill. I remember, while sitting once in the beautiful Mortella Gardens near Mentone, hearing two puffing English gentlemen make the following remarks.

"An infernal kind of place," said one.

"What a fearful hill, and what awful steps," said the other. "Give me Kew Gardens, I like my flowers on the flat."

However, I did not quite agree with him, although feeling tired myself at the time.

Branching away up the slope and through the valley were tiny little paths *à deux*, bordered with ferns, rhododendrons, and bright-leaved shrubs. Trees grew in the woods, the first young leaves coloured a brilliant red.

The East is a land of colour—man, woman, and vegetation loving bright things; and I am sure the oxen would appreciate their tinted horns, had they only an opportunity of looking in the glass.

There was a gymkhana ground in Jackatalla Valley, a flat spot among the hills. The military band often came there of an evening; people played games, and the music floated up through the glens. A notice caught my eye; it requested persons not to attend unless they were dressed.

A visitor came to stop at the hotel, who had a most beautiful servant. The master was nothing out of the common, but I shall never forget his attendant's walk, dress, manners, and handsome face.

There was a tomato-tree growing here. I took it for a plum, and was disappointed. I like plums, and do not care for tomatoes.

One morning before breakfast we drove to Lamb's Rock and Lady Canning's Seat. The road ran through a lovely wood, where mountain streams dripped over the stones, and watered into life thousands of ferns.

We did not know Lamb's Rock from Lady Canning's Seat. There was nothing comfortable anywhere to sit on; but perhaps Lady C. had a camp-stool. However, we climbed about and were satisfied with our morning's excursion. The air was fresh and crisp, whilst away beneath us stretched the distant Indian plains.

After leaving the carriage we followed a winding path through a shola, where all kinds of berries and plants, having seeded themselves, were flowering their happy lives away. On our way back we found a hedge of delicious hill-berries. They have the leaves of a blackberry, the appearance of a white raspberry, and taste like a Cape gooseberry. We did enjoy them.

Having got the coachman—the fellow who sits on the bar behind—and ourselves into position, we were photographed. I was kindly sent a copy of myself (and ——, the others) comfortably seated in the victoria. As I do not affect a blue gauze drapery round my sola topee, it is not too unbecoming a likeness.

The delivery of letters is wonderfully managed in

India. For instance, say "Brown" comes to live at an hotel, it is likely he will get all the letters belonging to people whose name begins with B, that is, if he happens to be the oldest B resident. The postmen are evidently slow readers. There was one other lady in India possessing the same name as myself. She lived in the north; I in the south. She got my letters; I received hers. At last we opened a correspondence, and managed our own postal arrangements without help from the authorities. One day I was presented with a letter for no reason at all. There was nothing like my name or address written on the envelope. I suppose the rightful owner was hard to find, and the postman did not want any more bother. It was not until I had opened it and discovered that I was somebody's darling Popsey, that I realised the mistake.

Many people suffer so much from the heat that they hire a native boy to type their letters. The Indian typist can produce a terrible combination of words. I saw a letter from a lady stating "that she was stopping in the mungle, the husband had gone to hay some ends a visin—madras," &c.

At last the day arrived when we all had settled to start back to heat, dust, mosquito-nets, cockroaches, and

ants of various colours. The bullocks came for our luggage; a carriage for ourselves; and at midday we left Coonoor and descended slowly into the heated valley. Many trees had come into flower since my upward journey, so that the woods were full of interesting surprises. The train, too, made less noise, and we were fresh, which is a better condition for appreciating the beautiful than when dying of fatigue. Before starting, the plague department presented me with a passport; but little did I know the pleasures in store for me when I received that harmless-looking bit of paper.

The usual Eastern meal awaited us at Mettupalaiyam, and, though rather late in the day, we called it luncheon, because we hoped for something called dinner later. I had taken my seat on the Madras mail, where the servant found my name and made up my bed while I was at my repast. It proved to be a comfortable carriage: large, broad sofas, covered with leather, ran down each side under the windows. There were top-berths, which could be let down, but no one hankered after them. Outside, little wooden verandahs protected the carriage from the heat of the sun. There were blue glass, wire meat-safe screens, or wooden venetian shutters. The blue glass was pleasant when the wind blew cold, which happened but

BULLOCK CARTS

seldom. The wire blind I found very nice. It let in air, yet protected one from the curious gaze of natives at the railway stations; but they were not to be depended upon after dark, for once the carriage-lamp had been lighted, you became a spectacle for the admiring public. It was then the venetian shutters came in handy. A small square space was given up to kus kus. Kus kus is a scented grass. The Great Mogul used quantities of it. When woven into a species of mat and kept wet, the hot wind from outside passes through, and becomes a cool, refreshing breeze. Unhappily the apparatus for damping the grass was out of order, and only hot air reached me, laden with dry, broken, dusty kus kus stalks. That journey to Madras was the hottest ever I had, but the usual entrancing sights were to be seen all along the line while daylight lasted. Some men wore almost nothing; others were dressed in spotted muslin over pink, like an old-fashioned cottage toilet-table, their drapery being kept in place by a black velvet waistcoat brilliantly embroidered in flowers; they also wore caps, sparkling masses of gold threadwork. There were bronze young fathers, whose greatest pleasure seemed to lie in nursing the baby, and they lavished any amount of attention on their little playthings, as they sat beginning the

day with that usual heavy native 'breakfast of horrible-looking sweets.

The wells of India were a constant source of wonder to me. In some places it took a pair of bullocks and two men to draw a bucket of water. Up to every well-head ran an inclined plane, generally under shading trees. Oxen walked down these in leisurely fashion, raising the tub or skin of water, which was attached by a rope to the yokes. One man in the well superintended matters down below, whilst another drove the team, and saw that the precious fluid was not wasted. It seemed to us, machine-ridden British, a singular waste of labour, but one must take into consideration that this is a country where men live on a penny a day.

Nearing Madras, I noticed even more amusing wells. A pole was balanced in the air tied crosswise to an upright. At one end a barrel was fastened. Two acrobats undertook lowering and raising it by running from one end of the board to the other, racing down with the empties and up with the fulls. A native waited above, and also one below, to regulate matters; making in all four men and one pail of water.

We were kept waiting an hour outside Madras, while a man seated at a table dissected our passports. I was

given a new one, and told I should have to visit the health officer every day. The document I received seemed simple enough. It stated that my caste and occupation was E; my father's name, age, and sex was F; that I was permanently Irish, but would reside in the Connemara Hotel. There was a quantity of printed matter I did not read, but a vacant space had been left for the health officer to fill with remarks about me during the ten days I had to visit him.

There was a deal of argument and noise, as we waited while the sun rose over picturesque, crookedly growing palms bending away from the sea-breeze. Madras began to awake and straggle to life. Dhobies followed their donkeys, and undid bundles of clothes to wash, by the side of a shiny green pool, the hungry animals beginning at once to eat sand for breakfast.

Happily I could afford to wait patiently, for I had had my morning meal before sunrise. However, I was longing for a bath. The third-class passengers showed a fine disregard for wash-hand basins, and performed their ablutions on the platform, where there was such a plentiful supply of water that they could often even manage a shower-bath. In the carriage one had to rest content with a little scrub in soda-water, for the brown, dusty

fluid supplied by the railway company almost always ran short.

The family of Ponnepan, my servant, lived in Madras, so naturally his heart was in the place. I had engaged him originally on the spur of the moment, because he had a nice face and kind eyes; also he was a Tamil and would not throw away his breakfast if my shadow fell on it. He was old and, for a native, fat. He had spent much of his life in the hills. His chits (testimonials) described him as a man and not a saint, so I did not suspect them of being imaginary productions. He only asked for fourpence a day board, and, I expect, managed on far less, but travelling servants want a lot of little extras. With every change of weather and climate they pine for some article of clothing which they do not already possess. To give Ponnepan his due, he had a beautiful way of begging for anything he wanted. He had also a charming knack of putting his foot in it, and bothering, but he was superlatively devoted, and had a fine tact at times. I felt he was willing to rob me for himself, and everybody else for me. He had a chic way of dressing. No shoes, muslin drapery round his legs, a white linen coat, red sash, and a yard of soft stuff wound into a turban. Later on, in the north, he often covered

himself up in a warm, dark blue coat I had given him at his own suggestion. He did not do very much actual work, perhaps, preferring to potter about pretending to be a lady's maid, but he made the hotel servants hurry up and mind their business.

At Madras, surrounded by his children, he more or less went on the spree during the middle of the day, but I consoled myself by thinking that there must be some good in so fond a father.

CHAPTER IX

MADRAS

I WAS expected at the Connemara Hotel, a very efficient sort of hall-porter meeting me at the station, and while Ponnepan was engaged with his family this individual saved me bother and worry, but not money; his methods were expensive.

I had been given an expansive room at the hotel. Standing like an oasis in the centre was a bit of carpet and a tiny bed. I tried to keep my trunks together in a corner; the weather was too hot for long walks about that huge apartment. There were many windows and doors, dust and draught. I dared not lay my things on the deep window-sills, for thriving colonies of red ants had made happy homes in the cracked cement. There was no doubt about that palace of a room being noisy. All day and all night the punkah-wallahs chatted outside. They charge eightpence to pull a punkah for twenty-four hours, trusting to get a little rest when you are out or asleep. Next door chatted the other

visitors, while in the hall close by the proprietor and hotel servants held loud, recriminating communications. Through the beautifully ventilating venetian-shuttered doors and windows all these sounds reached me, and, tired as I was, I had to stuff my ears with cotton-wool to get even a fitful slumber.

I must not forget to add that one corner of my room was set apart by Ponnepan for the storage of his own property. It was a miscellaneous bundle, in which he kept concealed a little of my note-paper, the thing of mine he most appreciated.

The feeding was good. Large breakfasts, luncheons, and dinners, morning and afternoon tea in one's bedroom; total charge, six rupees per day.

There were terrible punkahs waving over the dining-room tables, and if you did not dodge them carefully on entering, you had to sit through dinner with your hair looking as if it had not been brushed for a month. The feelings of many nice, tidy young men caught unawares must have been terrible.

There were many interesting people living at the hotel. I had often pleasant chats with a planter, and his fresh young wife delighted to hear news. They were at Madras for their yearly shopping expedition.

One evening I met a *Mooltan* passenger. They seem to have flooded India. We greeted each other like old friends, went out driving together, and parted. My fellow-traveller had come from the north, where the cold had been intense.

Two principal features that strike a visitor on arriving at Madras is the flatness and the red dust. The colour of the vegetation along the side of the road is hidden by the latter, but the thorough and extensive flatness of the country is what astonishes one most. Giants might have levelled it for a croquet lawn, and then left humanity to build their little houses over it. The Cooum River gets through the town; it does not run. It is a perfect book of reflection; has no current or downfall, but just lies among the buildings and gardens asleep.

The roads and streets are broad; five carriages could drive abreast. They straggle away over the country for miles, and generally beautiful trees arch over them. No one arrives anywhere who attempts walking in Madras. Gharry hire is cheap, four rupees a day, and the horses are the worst in India. My animal's condition went to my heart every time I took it out, but if I left it at home somebody else used it, so I hit on

the plan of driving to the Botanical Gardens and strolling about while the horse rested at the gate. His hours of idleness were spent tied to a tree eating dry moss.

The Madras brougham is a wonderful invention. After sunset ours fell to pieces and became splendidly draughty, but before that we were safely shut up in a kind of box, where we were stifled.

The mosquitoes were small but terrible. It is, I believe, the lady mosquito that makes herself so disagreeable. I sampled their bites all over India. Some made big bumps, some small, but they were all equally disfiguring and painful. Indian servants manage to arrange the nets beautifully. They roll them up every morning, and let them down again carefully at night.

The weather at Madras is overpoweringly hot all the year round. People drive down to the Marina and try to forget the sun. The Marina is a broad, red road on the shore. There is a band of wind-blown vegetation, sand, and then the sea. The natives of Madras seem to live on the sand. The wind blowing in from the Bay of Bengal has little grains of salt in it, which stings one's face. That breeze keeps the inhabitants alive like artificial respiration.

The Marina is miles long, and at one end stands the cathedral of St. Thomas. It is a fine old building shaped like a cross, and dedicated to the apostle who did not believe in our Lord until he had put his hand into His wounds. He is supposed to have laboured in the East, and was martyred here. His cell appears enshrined in the centre of the church, which seemed a rude imitation of St. Peter's at Rome. There is very fine black wood carving in the choir. An ayah with an English baby was spending her morning before the different altars. This is a common sight. The child crawled about happily, and played with its shoes.

Miles of beggars were waiting outside the door. On Sundays there are more. They appeared very wretched, and are perhaps the principal native Christian population of Madras.

The following quaint story is told.

Two poor Indian workmen meeting in the street, one said to the other, "What religion are you?"

"A Catholic, and I get seven rupees a week."

"Seven rupees! I am a Protestant, and only get six. Certainly I shall become a Catholic."

At the other end of the Marina comes the harbour.

The drive there was long and beautiful. A bridge spanned the picturesque river. There were rows of trees fighting for their lives against the wind. I stopped the carriage and took a sketch. The people crowded round. They were delighted when I began to colour, and enchanted to see themselves in groups about the sand. The coachman got angry and remonstrated. It hurt his dignity to become suddenly a penny peep-show.

Handsome red sandstone buildings, tinted and discoloured by the salt air, happen all the way along beside the sea. Thus prematurely aged, Madras has the appearance of being hundreds and hundreds of years old.

The harbour is no great distance from the central station. It is built of white granite, and somewhat resembles Kingstown, near Dublin.

I remarked a notice posted up, forbidding any but business people to walk down the pier, but as nobody paid the least attention to this command, I thought I might do likewise, so started off to explore, taking care to dodge the loaded trucks wheeled about by coolies. The sight of great liners unloading did not fascinate me, but I sat on an empty cask and studied

the native boating arrangements. An aunt of mine once had a terrible landing at Madras, before the building of the breakwater. She had suffered all the agonies of drowning by anticipation, therefore I naturally felt an interest in the native mariner.

An Indian sews his boat together. The stitch used is what a lady would call the top stitch. I watched a man on the beach hard at work. He passed his needle and thread round a rope pad which covered the inside seam of his boat to prevent leakage. His craft was shaped like a deep, flat-bottomed barge pointed at both ends. While I was waiting, one of these came ashore through the surf. The passengers, with nothing on but turbans, jumped into the water, and carried their clothed friends up the beach to dry land. The Masula boat thus lightened, and lying broadside to the sea, was washed ashore by the waves. The owners seemed to have no more trouble.

A catamaran is simply a log of very buoyant wood. The men who go to sea in these primitive craft are not drowned, but you or I would be.

In Madras there is a conveyance called a jutka. Hindus alone use this; Christians have not been educated up to it. I thought it resembled a two-wheeled

omnibus. It holds six people inside, a few on the roof, two in front, and one on the step. The very smallest, tiniest pony that can be found is driven in it. The passengers have to climb into their places very carefully, otherwise they would raise the animal off its legs. In a narrow thoroughfare I saw a man in a dogcart fighting a fine black horse. He would certainly have been killed, only he was such a fearless devil.

Round about Madras were many toddy-palms, and it was a common sight to see men run up them. They have a ladder, but do not use it; I suppose they consider it dangerous. They tie a rope round their waist and the trunk of the tree, spancel their two feet together and fly to the top. They wound the palm, and fasten a little pot under the cut to catch the juice. That little pot looks from below like a cocoanut growing in the wrong place. They make a kind of intoxicating drink out of the liquid, and Government taxes the trees.

I went often to the Botanical Gardens, and stayed there a long time when the horse was more than usually tired. Tall, flowering cannas, and many other beautiful plants grew in profusion. There was a pond, a little temple, and some comfortable seats. I noticed

a pointed grass, which speared your legs, and gave every one a great fright in that country of tropical insect life. One day there arrived a rich, well-to-do merchant and his friend. It was a holiday, so by way of a festive treat he was wheeling his baby boy out in his English perambulator. A friend had been invited to share this happiness. The child was a quiet child enough. When he was in the perambulator he wanted to get out, and when out he pined to be inside. I left the pair in the garden, chatting away as happy as sandboys.

Every morning while I was in Madras I had to drive to a little open shed, where sat the health-officer. He was a very polite native gentleman, who, having presented me with a chair, proceeded to sign my passport. Each day he seemed surprised but resigned to find me alive and well.

One European died of plague while I was in Madras. He was a small boy, and was said to have caught the infection through playing about in a room where a diseased dead rat had been found, so the authorities had offered a reward for the killing of these animals. At first they gave three annas a rat, but the amount of corpses they received was so enormous that, fearing bankruptcy, they had lowered the price to one anna.

MADRAS, CANNAS IN THE BOTANICAL GARDENS

The sunsets in Madras were beautiful, and different from Bombay, the west being inland. One afternoon there was thunder far off in the distance. Only a few drops of rain fell, but each drop contained a pint of water. They were of tropical growth, like everything else.

I found the native town interesting, but the stalls principally offered for sale cheap, gaudy prints made in Birmingham. I wonder what the people do with them, for they display such very good taste in dress whenever the state of the weather permits them to appear slightly clothed.

There is a long street in Madras called Mount Street. It is a day's journey from one end to the other, but people who have anything to sell live there. They spread their shops out, and give themselves oceans of room to breathe. When you want to buy anything, hire a carriage, and allow yourself plenty of time. A man who sold me a silver cream-jug (which I did not want) invited me into his back premises to see his hands at work. In a shed, sitting on the ground, six men were engaged embroidering a white silk dress. The material was stretched on a low frame between them. They sewed very fast, with nothing to guide them but a

pencil dot here and there. Under some shelter beyond, silversmiths were at work. One had a hammer and a blunt nail, and using only these simple tools, he was covering the back of a brush with elephants, gods, serpents, and trees. I had no time to see what the other men were doing.

It interested me greatly to watch the bullocks enjoying their daily swim in the river. When the animals live too far away for this pleasure, their masters water them all over. In the south the water-buffalo, a huge black creature, with long horns and no hump, is hardly ever worked. They wander about in charge of a tiny child. I have been overwhelmed with terror sometimes while sketching on the maidan surrounded by them, for they seem to hate Europeans, and an officer told me he had often been attacked by them while he was out snipe-shooting, and had had to crave the protection of a small child some inches high, a fearless imp whom the huge creature docilely obeyed.

The bullock with a hump has a sweet, patient expression, full of brotherly love, but the water-buffalo has a sour, contemptuous cast of countenance like Mephistopheles. A cow wandering about waiting to be milked, and followed by her calf, may be harmless or

dangerous as the case may be. Thus a nice walk on a cool evening is not altogether unmitigated bliss in India.

The fakirs stalked about, holily ragged. I saw one man who was a sort of saint. He had held one arm up in the air until it had withered, and looked like a jointless, upright piece of stick. It was awful.

One evening I prepared to leave Madras for the north. I arrived early at the station, and had a fine, jovial time trying to sort out the coolies who had carried my luggage from those who had simply looked on, for every porter expected me to give something. I could not expect much help from Ponnepan, surrounded as he was by an adoring family soon to be left lamenting. He had, however, borrowed money from me to provide for them, and brought them all forward to kiss my feet, be introduced, and receive a present of sweetmeats. They were a wonderfully dressed little group, from the baby in pink wool knitted pin-cushion kind of cap, to a tall boy in a light plaid silk coat, trousers, and gold-embroidered hat. The mother was a slight, graceful, pretty creature.

Gentlemen's servants travelling with their masters have a carriage reserved for them, so Ponnepan & Co. retired to take up his quarters. However, he left most

of his property under the seat in my carriage; a little trick he had.

There was plenty of time to spare before the train started, so I amused myself at the window opposite me. On the other side of the platform was a horse-box containing six horses. These animals stood abreast, heels away from one and other; a canvas hammock hung between the six heads. It contained food. The creatures had different kinds of appetites; one always wound up the feast with a dessert of sacking.

At Arkouam I went to have dinner, leaving my servant to guard my things and make the bed. Most people spend the days and nights of a journey lying down, for it is most uncomfortable to sit on a bench with your back to the window.

I intended to rest a night at Bombay on my way to Agra. I could have made a short cut from Dhond to Munmad Junction, but it would have meant my remaining many hours of the night at a wayside station. I thought it wiser to spend a little more money and time on the journey, and pass those hours comfortably at an hotel in Bombay.

On returning from dinner, I found a mother and two pretty little girls in the carriage. They were on their

way home to England for good, and all the children seemed merry little things, and came from Kodaikanal, in the Pani Hills. Every trifle was a delightful novelty to them, and they were still going strong though their journey had begun in a palki early the day before.

There are good rooms at Arkouam Junction, where one can rest, dress, and have a hot bath while waiting for a train. The little girls passed a merry if not very restful night in the top berths, playing at being shipwrecked sailors. The principal thing of mine that delighted them was a pin-cushion, well stocked with many-coloured headed pins. Having spent most of their lives in India, they had seen nothing of the kind before. I presented them with some pins, but they considered such beautiful things too good for human nature's daily food, so their mother was requested to lock them away in her jewel-case.

We were over two nights and a day travelling to Bombay, and the Governor's carriage, which we had in tow, caught fire through the wheels heating, and there was great excitement in the darkness. The children nearly fell out of the window, and ever afterwards played at rescuing their dolls from burning trains.

The days and nights were passed in sleeping, eating, and amusing the children. In a train I keep myself

respectably dressed, as a lady once told me that whenever she settled down comfortably for the night, there was sure to be a railway accident, so I do not tempt Providence by remaining in a state of deshabille.

At one station where we all got out for a meal, I returned to find that Ponnepan had made up my bed with a little girl's doll resting solemnly in it. I suppose the children had left it there, and he did not like to disturb its sleep.

I was very tired on arriving at the Great Western Hotel, but freshened up after a bath and breakfast. I found the little girls sitting in the lift supremely happy, waiting until some one wanted it, and then, if there was no room for them they would fly upstairs in time to return with the empties. We all dined at the same table, and such things as those children had a fancy for!—sweet chutney, &c. In the afternoon, while the parents were busy, they drove with me to Victoria Gardens. Ponnepan came with us and carried buns for the animals. The thing the children most enjoyed was imitating the driver's shout to clear the way, seated at the bottom of the victoria, their little feet resting on the step outside.

I found Bombay cooler than Madras, and I had a room into which the sun never entered. A lady was stopping

at the hotel who had just arrived from England, all her luggage having gone on by mistake in the steamer to Kurrachee. She was very fat, far beyond stock size, so could find nothing ready made to wear.

I had a cooler and cheaper room this time at the hotel, but it was noisy, and had no view; so every advantage has its drawbacks. My little travelling-friends could call me from their balcony, which they began doing early in the day, afterwards creeping in under the shutter across my door as soon as they were dressed, to say good morning. They were certainly great company, wanting all kinds of information: "Had I had the plague?" &c. &c.

At 17 o'clock I left Victoria Station for Agra, by the Great Indian Peninsular Railway. I had a carriage to myself, no changes, and expected to arrive at my destination late the following afternoon.

The scenery after leaving Bombay was beautiful. We travelled slowly through wild, desolate-looking ghâts, and then among autumnal-looking woods, for trees lose their leaves in the hot weather. Queerly-shaped rocky mountains rose from the plains, often with handsome Jain temples built on the top. Here and there grew trees and bushes having hardly any foliage, but covered with flowers the colour of a fox-hunter's coat, whilst wandering about were

camels, monkeys, peacocks, birds like wild turkeys (but called by some other name), and many other things. There was a curious belt of country, completely dotted over with small holes, which gave it a most extraordinary appearance, but nearing Agra we passed through desolate, flat, sandy plains stretching away as far as the eye could reach.

The feeding was excellent, and prices very much the same as on Continental trains. Sometimes refreshment-cars were hooked on, but often we had our meals at railway stations overrun with flowering rows of pink and white oleanders, tall, handsome natives, and wretched-looking dogs. There were peddlers and men wanting to sweep out the carriage, fruit-sellers, all trying to get you to spend money on things you did not want, and cheating you into the bargain.

The picturesque fortress or Rock of Gwalior is well in view of the station.

This place is the capital of a native state governed by the Maharajah of Scindia. Two ladies got into my carriage here. They had been stopping at the dak bungalow, and had parcels and bedding enough to set up house. They began adding up their expenses and settling accounts. The scenery did not seem to have made much impression on them.

CHAPTER X

AGRA

On arriving at Agra I was seized by the hotel porter, presented with a carriage, my luggage being placed in a little box on wheels drawn by a pony, and having a roof over it like a frilled pin-cushion. It was funny to see two fat men sitting in a machine like that.

When people mention Agra, listeners think naturally of the Taj, that beautiful astonishment, and imagine the town to be a fine kind of place as well. I was amazed to see how ugly it was. It was flat, and even a bright tropical sun could not smarten the country up; all was a grey, sad-coloured dusty shade, and none of the beautiful red sand of the south was to be seen. No one but a very Great Mogul would have thought of building anything beautiful in a place like that.

The river Jumna flows round, but it is a poor, desolate, empty sort of river, bordered by dun-coloured plains, where grow little green bushes, which come in handy to feed the camels. Queerly-shaped walls, houses, and sheds

straggled around for miles, and always the same dreary, dusty shade.

In a large garden, one mass of profusely flowering and well-watered plants, stood Laurie's Hotel. In times gone by all one's ancestors have stopped here. It is almost as ancient as the Taj.

I had a large bedroom in a detached building among the vegetation. Other visitors could be accommodated there too. My apartment was large and carpeted; had a dressing and bath room off it; was cool, and furnished with a bed, chair, and table. I could hang my clothes on a hook, or leave them about. There was a notice hanging near the door, requesting visitors not to ill-use the hotel servants. It also made known that every one was expected to provide themselves with an attendant, as the hotel management could not keep their butlers wandering about the garden looking for lost boarders.

All the sparrows from the dreary country round seemed to have come in here to live. They particularly affected the dining-room, breakfasting with us principally on butter, but they did not dine; the hour was unsuitable, I suppose.

We had breakfast at nine, luncheon at half-past one, and dinner at eight. Ponnepan slept on the verandah

outside my bedroom door. He brought me my "chhota hazri" in the early morning, and got the hotel servant to do everything else there was to be done, except making my bed, and cleaning the tumblers in my picnic basket. Also stealing flowers and eggs from the landlord for me he considered his own special duty.

The food was good. A notice in the dining-room "forbade gentlemen's servants to wear shoes." I could never understand why, unless it was that the landlord feared his waiters' toes might get trodden on.

There were many separate tables, and on each of them was placed every day a fresh bunch of large roses, red, white, or tea-coloured. They were symbolical of the Taj, and stood surrounded by a very poor —— kind of table-cloth. A little, fat head-waiter strutted about, and carried himself as if he had been the Great Mogul. Puffing and important he pattered round with bare feet, always welcoming the coming and speeding the departing guests, a constant caricature. I did not understand his English, and he could not make head or tail of mine. When I asked for some more coffee, he brought me tea in my dirty cup, but after a bit I obtained what I wanted without any effort of speech. Patience, I find, is the commodity most useful in the East. Cross, irritable

people fuss, and a native servant fussed becomes a helpless imbecile.

The attendants showed a fine sense of *les convenances;* stray ladies and gentlemen were seated at separate tables. A married couple might dine anywhere they liked, but the butler thought it more correct for them to eat their dinner in the female department, and that was how I came to know a couple on their honeymoon. One night I was astonished to find a young man at my table. He had had too many pegs, which rendered him unmanageable. However, he was quite harmless, for although a little drunk he was a gentleman, and I prefer a tipsy gentleman to a sober cad. He had been out shooting since early dawn, and took nothing but soda water for dinner—too late, alas! I was astonished to hear that anything to shoot lived in those dusty deserts.

Now I must really get on to the Taj, which I was most impatient to see, always having had a romantic interest in it. Think of a king, and an Eastern one, allowed plenty of queen consorts, building such a monument to his wife after the birth of their thirteenth child. Like the Frenchman, I was inclined to remark, "What a woman she must have been to inspire the creation of such a memorial." Since my arrival in India, I had had Taj

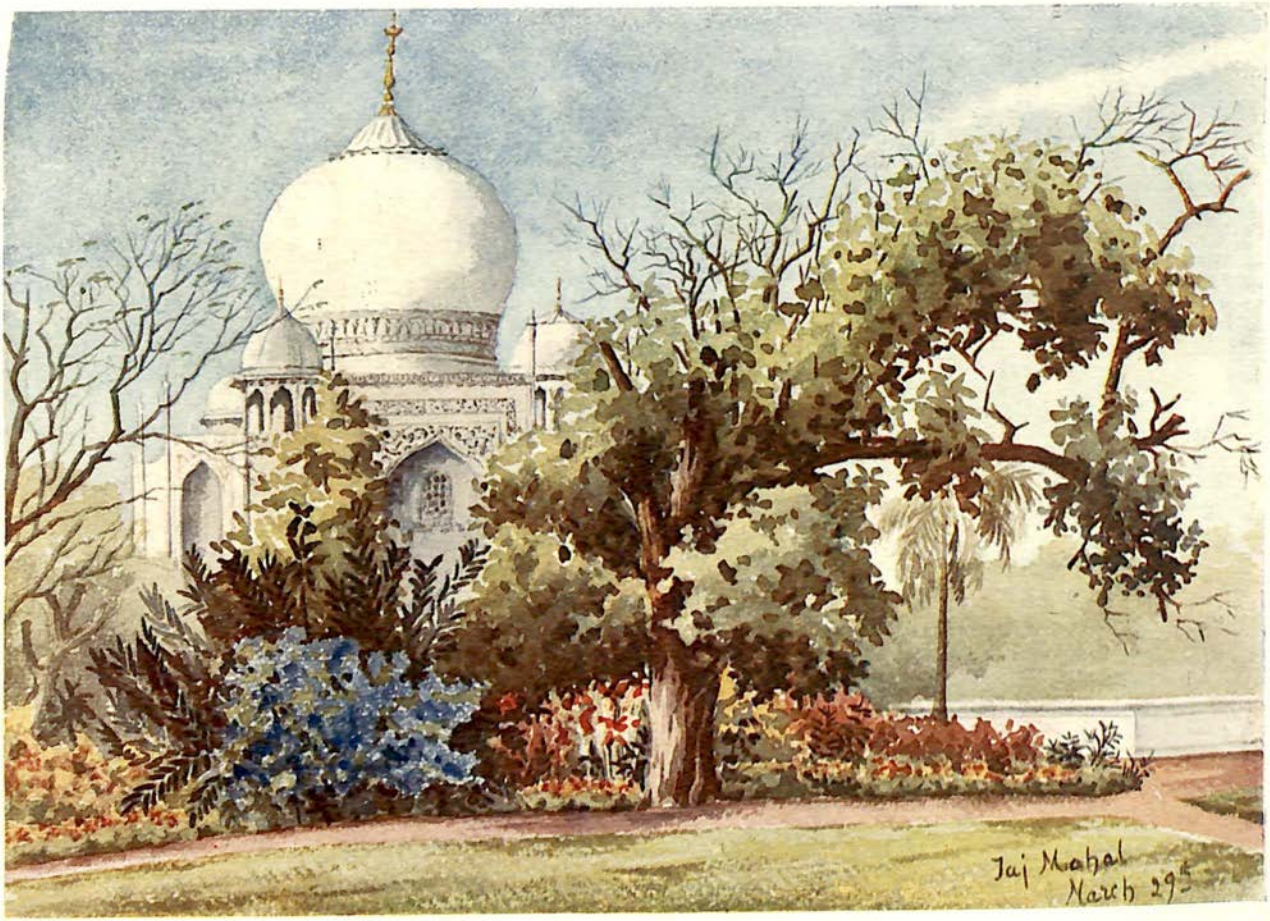
rammed down my throat until I got it on the brain. Officers grown old in the service had spent their last days crawling up to see it. One man had ridden to the gate and glanced through, but being on the march and having no time to dismount, had ever afterwards the appearance of one "whom sorrow had his young days shaded." Of course I expected to be disappointed, and in a way I was. The first time I went to Naples, I imagined there would be a mountain having a kind of huge bonfire on its summit visible from all parts of the town.

I expected the Taj to shine, a polished mass reflecting the sun, but found it did not sparkle at all, being built of a dullish white marble. After that first bitter disappointment, I settled down contented with the rest. I had a great pair of horses, and rattled along in fine style, for although it was the end of the season, and most things a rupee cheaper, the animals were in good condition. Perhaps the uninteresting country about Agra does not tempt tourists to work the poor creatures to death; they just potter about the Taj and the Fort, and then drift back again to the Taj.

We drove through a sort of parky garden, and entering gateway number one, found ourselves in a very

large cloistered quadrangle, built for the accommodation of travellers, pilgrims, and saints. Here waiting carriages were standing under shading trees. They appeared small specks in that vast space. After seeing gateway number two you never look again at gateway number one, and yet it is a fine block of red sandstone, sheltering in one of its niches a man selling little alabaster Tajes. Every day he pestered me to buy a hideous little caricature of one of the most beautiful buildings in the world. I suppose there are people who purchase these, and bring them home to educate their poor untravelled brothers.

After mounting some steps, and passing from the glaring sunshine, we found ourselves in the cool shade of the giant red-sandstone gateway. A notice hangs near, stating that the authorities pay the caretakers, and that the place is closed at 10 P.M. A wooden mallet strikes a gong to give warning of this. The sound is barbaric and penetrating. There are remarks from the Koran, in black marble on a white ground, round the arched outside. One day eluding the caretaker, "whose wages were paid," I rambled round that gateway by myself, and got lost among endless rooms, duplicate stairs, and passages. I was not despairingly lost like the lady in



TAJ MAHAL, AGRA

the "Mistletoe Bough," for every now and then I came out on an arched balcony looking down on the hall below. By dint of perseverance and luck, I did extricate myself from that building; but I do not know how, for there was no system or sense about any of those passages, staircases, and rooms.

A broad band of water in form of a cross ran through the gardens, and in the centre of this water-cross is a raised marble platform, where you can sit and rest opposite the Taj. Little baby yew-trees grow on each side of the water. Their grandfathers died one dry season long ago. I daresay they had a grander effect. Rows of tiny fountains play every evening. I mention these little items, as I find other writers have forgotten to make any remark about them.

The first thing that strikes you about the Taj is its size. It is so large, so high, so very neatly finished. You feel a grudge against those toys at the gate, and hopelessly disappointed with photographs or pictures. For the first time you then realise that this is a wonder that must be seen, not read about and imagined.

Acres of paved terrace rise from the river to support this colossus of white marble, which is beautifully inlaid. At each end of the terrace are fine red-sandstone build-

ings matching the gateway. One is a mosque; the other simply built to keep it company, and of no use to the faithful. Round the garden run high walls, which here and there break out into cloisters, and little palaces where the gardeners keep their brooms, brushes, and watering-pots. From the terrace is an extensive view of the running-dry kind of river, and the dusty plains, but quite to be admired from here. Turtles crawl about sunning themselves in the mud, and camels graze on the bushes along the banks.

Marble steps lead to the tomb. A guide pounced on us as we entered. He sang, and echoes answered him, but they made no similar response to our clattering footsteps. Those echoes were beautifully arranged by the workmen of Shah Jehan, who was in the habit of throwing the poor fellows from a tower if their inventions were not up to the mark. Such treatment certainly encouraged them to do their best.

Inside an exquisitely alabaster pierced screen stands the marble tomb of Arjumand Banu Begum, called Mumtaz Mahal, or Exalted One of the Palace. Silver doors once closed the screened chamber, but these were stolen.

A Mohammedan priest was saying his rosary, but left

AGRA FORT, FROM THE TAJ

off his prayers to explain things, accepting bakshish as a gift from Allah. He read us the inscription on the marble grave of Shah Jehan's lovely queen—for she must have been lovely:—

"The illustrious sepulchre of Arjumand Banu Begum, called Mumtaz Mahal. Died in 1040 A.H. [1630 A.D.].

"He is the everlasting; He is sufficient. God is He, besides whom there is no God. He knoweth what is concealed and what is manifest. He is merciful and compassionate." "Nearer unto God are those who say, Our Lord is God."

Poor Shah Jehan's tomb was scrunched, by his unfeeling son Aurangzib, into a corner beside his beloved wife. He had really intended to build himself a black marble Taj on the other side of the Jumna, connecting the two buildings by a silver bridge. But man proposes, &c. His son revolted, and he spent the remaining years of his life in prison. Over his remains is inscribed the following:—

"The illustrious sepulchre and sacred resting-place of His Most Exalted Majesty dignified as Razwan (the Guardian of Paradise), having his abode in Paradise, and his dwelling in the starry heaven, inhabitant of the regions of bliss, the second lord of the Qiran Shah Jehan, the king

valiant. May his tomb ever flourish, and his abode be in the heavens. He travelled from this transitory world to eternity on the night of the 28th of the month of Rajab 1076 A.H. [1666 A.D.]."

The bodies of Shah Jehan and his wife really lie in the vault below—a very sacred place.

Before we left, the mullah (priest) presented me with a rose, which I suppose was stolen from the garden, to lay on the marble grave of the beautiful queen. I have the withered little flower yet.

The guide allowed us very little time for meditation. I had to remark and admire the specialities studied up for the instruction of tourists. I was shown the pattern bit of inlaying done by Italian workmen, who had been employed in Shah Jehan's time to teach the Indians their art. These latter were apt pupils, and to-day one can buy any inlaid article, from an ink-bottle to a tea-tray.

The light, penetrating through marble fretwork, is beautiful and soft. I was not disappointed in the Taj, but I was astonished; it was so different from anything I had imagined. I expected pillars, fairy-like flimsiness, instead of which I found a huge, solidly proportioned block of marble finically inlaid and finished.

Four little domes cluster round one large central dome,

all so far away that you forget about them while walking round the terrace. Severe minarets stand at the corners of the marble square; people mount them who have energy and time. I think the Taj could have done without them. They strike one as an afterthought added on, perhaps to call the faithful to prayer. The caretakers now climb them an hour before sunset every evening, to tell the birds to go away and not spend the night roosting on Mumtaz Mahal's peerless monument. Indian birds must be gifted with a remarkable degree of intelligence, for, as the wild sing-song chant begins to make itself heard, doves and little parrots hurry through their last mouthful of supper, and take flight to their bedrooms in the Fort.

The garden, in which Mumtaz Mahal once delighted, was a mass of roses and other flowers in great trailing clusters, shaded by many old forest-trees. During the days of the Mogul it had been the fashion to bury yourself where life had proved most enjoyable, so here was evidently the spot where Shah Jehan's wife had spent a happy time. Every hour I could spare I likewise passed here, sitting among the flowers and watching the domes through the trees, or resting on the terrace above the river, where huge turtles crawled about the muddy sand, and a ferry-boat

crossed backwards and forwards, bringing over loads of natives to visit their idol. Sometimes a man lost an oar, but it was no hardship for a lightly-clad Hindu to plunge over the side and swim after it. The Fort could be seen at a bend of the river, huge guarding walls enclosing many treasures. One might always sit here in peace, for there were no guides to bother; they hovered about the building. Troops of people passed to and fro along the paved way between the gateway and the Taj. Hideous purdah ladies, their dresses sticking out in front over a kind of crinoline, their toes covered with rings, and their faces half concealed (but not beautified) by a gaudy-coloured print bed-curtain, which, as a rule, hung over their heads. They seem to have none of the grace and beauty of their southern sisters. One day, as a Parsee lady walked near me through the gateway, my eye was caught by a tiny monkey she carried. Seeing my gaze fixed on it, she stopped in order to allow me to pet the poor little animal, which clung to her terrified. So was I. It was profusely decorated with little chains and ornaments. We smiled on each other, being both speechless.

Ponnepan, who thought it his duty to attend me on all my excursions, considered an afternoon spent in the

Taj Gardens a great waste of carriage hire, so possessing the power of making himself understood, he generally got the coachman to take me home through the native bazaar. Like Agra itself, it was a disappointing, smelly place, full of horrible-looking eatables, beggars, and flies. It was so narrow and crowded that the horses snailed, though the "sitting-behind man" ran on in front to clear the way. Naturally I was set upon by hundreds of importunate shopmen and mendicants.

Opposite the Delhi Gate stands the Jumma Masjid, or Cathedral Mosque, built by Jhanara Shah Jehan's faithful daughter. The huge red-sandstone domes have zigzag stripings of white marble, and all the poorest peddlers, squalid misery, and dirt of Agra squat round the outside walls, rather spoiling the magnificence of the building at close quarters.

I remember with pleasure the bright hours spent in the Fort. The walls are very high and strongly fortified, but modern artillery would soon reduce them to ruins. They afford protection, however, in cases of native risings, and it was here the English weathered the Indian Mutiny. The Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, Mr. Colvin, lies buried in front of the Diwan-i-âm.

Agra was not a prominent Mutiny place. A mob plundered the city, burnt the public buildings, and murdered any Europeans they could catch, but the soldiers, many inhabitants and refugees, shut themselves up in the Fort, remaining safely there until the fall of Delhi. Five thousand eight hundred and forty-five people were huddled into that small space, two thousand of them being children. They had sufficient food and ammunition to last a year. They were not closely besieged or much harassed, though some sallies, from which many returned wounded, were found advisable. At one time they thought of blowing up the handsome Jumma Masjid Mosque, which overlooks the Delhi Gate, but happily this precaution was not necessary.

No native is allowed inside the Fort without an order, which, however, hotel-keepers can procure for their coachmen. In spite of this, Ponnepan managed to penetrate, and, devoured by the most overwhelming curiosity, poked his nose into everything.

Driving through the Delhi Gate up a paved causeway, the syce stopped at the entrance of the Moti Masjid, or Pearl Mosque, which had been used as an hospital during the Mutiny. We entered an immense square, paved and surrounded by white marble cloisters,

where priests of old chatted, meditated, and prayed. Surmounted by huge white domes is the mosque proper. Little inlaid patches facing west allot to every man a small portion of praying-room, while behind beautifully pierced purdah-screens women once tried to save their souls. The Pearl Mosque is thought a lot of; a dazzling effect in white and blue is what I remember.

A high priest, of Mutiny times, showed us round and collected bakhshish. Having been faithful to the English through those terrible days, he is now allowed to guard and wander through his beautiful mosque, to which, however, he may no longer summon the faithful to prayer. He gazed sadly at our shod, desecrating feet.

The carriage let us down for good and all in the great courtyard of the Diwan-i-âm, or Hall of Public Audience. The first thing that caught my eye was a bath, deep as a well, with little steps cut both inside and out, for the use of the bather. The Hall is open and supported by colonnades of red-sandstone pillars, covered with chunam (a material resembling the white china of a tea-cup), to beautify and preserve them.

The manufacture of chunam is now a lost art. Some people thought it could be made of powdered sea-shells and cement, but their imitations were not a success.

Standing on Shah Jehan's throne is an alcove of inlaid marble. At the back of the Hall of Audience appeared a charming sergeant with a visitors' book, and having signed our names we were proceeding on our way, when he followed and showed us round from sheer love of the beautiful building, imbuing us with some of his worship for what we saw. He had often accompanied Lord Curzon, and quite lately the Prince of Wales, so we felt grateful and highly honoured, and indeed he prevented us from jumbling up everything we saw. We first visited the Machchi Bhawan, or Fish Square, once a tank filled with water, where, from the surrounding shady, arched niches of red sandstone, lovely women of the harem dropped down silken thread and fragile hook, to catch the gold and silver fish below.

The Great Moguls did not shut up their ladies for economy: their expenses were quite enormous.

Near the Fish Square stands the Naginah Masjid, or Gem Mosque, a beautifully devout small scrap of temple allotted to the ladies of the harem, whose charms were not even unveiled to the eyes of the priests. Here they could pray in quiet, with all arranged in the orthodox manner.

During his term of office Lord Curzon had done much

towards the restoration and preserving of buildings. He rejected screens and repairs he judged not up to the mark, refraining, however, from throwing the defaulting workmen over some precipice, a thing the Great Moguls were wont to do.

Near the Gem Mosque is the prison chamber where the poor builder of the Taj spent his old age. His affectionate son arranged this for him. The history of the Great Moguls can be condensed as follows. Barbar, the beginner, came from Central Asia, where he owned a little kingdom known as the Kokand. He appears to have been a poet, warrior, and gardener. During those years he spent in dusty Hindustan, he got home-sick after his flowers. He was succeeded by his son Humayun, for whom he is supposed to have sacrificed his life. Humayun was neither a warrior nor a poet. After that came Shere Shah, followed by his son Salim Shah, then Akbar the Great—the magnificent. He was born in the desert of Marmar, and began to reign in his eighteenth year. He was large-minded, and invented a religion composed of borrowed best-bits from all faiths. Christian and Hindus alike were safe from persecution under his unbigoted rule. In the desert he founded the great town of Fatehpur-Sikri, and built the Fort and

some of the Palace at Agra. He lies buried under a pile of sandstone and marble at Sikandra. He had but one little failing. Whenever he wanted to get rid of a troublesome friend, he just presented him with a lovely little sweet from a tiny private box of his own. That friend just reached home to die. Akbar was succeeded by his only child, Prince Salim, or Jahangir. None of Akbar's children had lived until a very holy man, Sheikh Salim Chisti, took his wives in hand, and by sacrificing the life of his own son, procured the birth of a live, healthy prince. It was most likely on account of the saint's residence there that Fatehpur-Sikri was built.

Jahangir, Akbar's son, waited many years true to the charms of Nur Mahal, a lady his father did not wish him to marry. When at last she consented to become his queen, he affectionately changed her name to Nur Jehan (Light of the World). She was a princess with a will of her own and did much as she liked, sometimes sitting outside the purdah, and going abroad unveiled.

Jahangir, who called himself Nur-ud-din Jahangir (Light of the Faith and Conqueror of the World), was nothing much of a man, being passionate, cruel, and

a drunkard. His son Shah Jehan, having disposed of his brothers, succeeded him. The latter will always be famous on account of that love-story which built the Taj. He also erected the Jumma Masjid, or Cathedral Mosque, at Delhi, the Moti Masjid, or Pearl Mosque, at Agra, and all the Delhi Palace. In his old age poor, broken-hearted Shah Jehan went somewhat to the bad. His third son, Aurangzib, revolted. He was a religious bigot, and altogether a poor specimen. He kept his father a prisoner in a sort of red-sandstone cage near the Gem Mosque. Through the fretwork walls came light and air, but no glimpse of his beloved wife's monument. His favourite daughter Jahanara kept him company, and after seven years of captivity she procured him the happiness of being carried out to die with his eyes fixed on the Taj, which can be seen from one side of the Fort rising like a pearl out of the dusty desert.

Aurangzib ruled with a firm hand, and added to his crimes by poisoning his sister. Weak-minded, dissolute successors came after him, until the line of the Great Moguls ended with the Indian Mutiny, when the king was taken at the siege of Delhi.

From the Gem Mosque we went to the Mina Bazaar,

and from the gallery, beautifully secluded by lovely fret-work marble screens, looked down on the space allotted to the merchants. Here ladies of the harem had squatted, haggling with the sellers below over the price of an article their souls longed after. When the last purchase was concluded, a basket would be lowered containing the money and would return laden with merchandise.

We passed through the baths, heated, like those at Rome, by fires lighted under to boil the water (with which the palace was plentifully supplied), a Persian wheel, or species of tread-mill, raising the water from the well to fill the cisterns at the top of the palace. The beautifully shaped marble fretwork windows showed signs of having once had small square panes of glass inserted in their solid sashes. From here one can see the Taj, but surrounded by too much barren wilderness to make it a "to-be-raved-about view."

The next thing we were shown was the Diwan-i-Khas, or Hall of Private Audience, a fine building on bunches of four pillars carved out of one single block of marble (the pillars, not the building).

Where sandstone was used, it had to be hidden by chunam, which is white and preserves the masonry underneath. Among the arches the marble vaulting was

carved to represent embroidered muslin curtains. On the terrace stand two thrones, one a block of white marble for the heir apparent or prime minister, and the other the famous black slate slab, a miracle business, which is supposed to have cracked and spurted out blood when the usurper Jât-Rajah Jawahar Singh of Bharatpur sat upon it. English people, however, believe that an earthquake cracked it, the blood being iron ore. From the terrace the Great Moguls could enjoy the sight of their brigantines on the river. I suppose there was more water there in those days. Also in the court below elephant fights took place, and from here were thrown careless attendants, who allowed the kings' rest to be broken, or who failed to awaken them at the right moment.

A flight of steps leads down to the Samman Burj, or Jasmine Tower, called after the flower with which it has been most delicately inlaid. At one time it was profusely dotted over with real gems, but of these there is but one emerald left, a poor, battered thing not worth stealing, but a constant delight to tourists, who never miss a chance of asking to be shown it.

This was Mumtaz Mahal's favourite apartment, and from the surrounding pillared balcony she had a fine

view of the river, plains of Agra, and the Taj Gardens, where one day she was to rest for ever. A fountain is shown in the court, which once sprinkled round a rose-water shower, the scent, tradition states, being invented by Arjumand Banu herself. Sloping walls over which water was allowed to fall appeared everywhere. Upon them were carved little artificial ripples, which produced a pleasing effect and murmuring sound. There was a raised platform inlaid with squares of black and white marble like a chess-board. This was used for the game of pachisi, an Eastern backgammon.

The Jasmine Tower is supposed to have been built by Jahangir for his lovely and accomplished wife, Nur Mahal, daughter of Itmad-ud-Daulah, his prime minister, who was also grandfather to Mumtaz Mahal, the inspirer of the Taj. We went through the Golden Pavilion, a series of little boxes for the accommodation of the ladies of the harem. There were tiny holes in the wall for storing away jewels. The wonderful thing about this part of the palace is the roof. The brilliant domes look like gold, but are, I believe, copper. From the bright glare outside we entered into the almost total darkness of the Shish Mahal, or Palace of Glass. This spot had evidently been a place of refuge during hot weather. Thousands of little mirrors were set

behind a screen of marble lace. The whole place teems with them. When a man lights a candle, you see a million lights reflected, and every one appears to possess hundreds and hundreds of heads. There were other secret, dark underground chambers, havens from the sun where the Emperor and his ladies spent the scorching days. Many dungeons were also shown where people could be quietly done to death, wives and relations murdered. I remember a wonderful grape garden (Anguri Bagh); the grapes, alas! no longer grow up the sandstone trellis. During the Mutiny times the British officers and their families lived here in the surrounding arched arcades. A married man had only two little alcoves as his share of accommodation, for space was very valuable when five thousand odd were shut up in the Fort.

The centre is laid out in geometrically shaped tiny flower-beds. Little holes are to be seen in the stone border, so that the garden could be flooded, a way they have of watering in the East. High-paved walks cross and surround the square, while on one side is a fountain, in the marble of which comfortable arm-chairs have been cut, where the heated, and, let us hope, appropriately clad visitors could at one time sit and enjoy a shower-bath.

The palace called the Jahangiri Mahal made a great

impression on me. It was totally different from everything that had gone before. It is believed to have been built by Akbar, and greatly resembles the style of Fatehpur-Sikri. On entering you imagine yourself surrounded by massively carved wood, yet not a scrap of timber has been used, carved ceilings, beams, balconies, supports, and fretted windows being all of dark red sandstone, burnt to a beautiful brown by the sun. We first went through a pavilion of fine fresco decorations. Then came a set of small rooms believed to have been inhabited by Akbar. In a long apartment, known as the library, a scrap of old painted decoration had been restored, "not wisely but too well," in very bright colours. There were pillared halls, arcades, and quadrangles, all very Hindu, with holes and crannies, great effects of light and shade, and deep darkness lying under countless arches, delightful to the eye in that land of glaring sunshine.

A curious elaborately ornamented apartment is shown as the dwelling-place of Jahangir's Hindu wife. In times gone by there were numbers of niches and resting-places for the statues of her deities. Altogether the palace is wonderful, gloomy, cool, almost cold, and indescribable.

In the courts grow the bright green sun-grass—such a colour, and so soft to the feet. It has to be watered often,

but dies and turns brown without the burning sun, so I did not bring any seed of it back with me to Ireland.

Our charming conductor told me that an American had been round taking measurements of the palace, with a view to erecting something of the sort in America for himself. In the early days there had been talk of robbing the Taj for marble, and so ending the life of that lovely memorial. Happily those days have fled, and even an American millionaire would not now be allowed to carry away that building to New York.

CHAPTER XI

FATEHPUR-SIKRI AND OTHER SIGHTS

KNOWING the terrible monotony and yellow-grey flatness of Agra, I did not look forward with pleasure to the twenty-six miles' drive to Fatehpur-Sikri, but one day seeing an advertisement to the effect that motor cars were for hire, I entered a sort of shed-shop to ask if one could be procured for my excursion.

The owner of the establishment emerged from his surroundings of odds and ends, and agreed to drive two friends and myself to Fatehpur-Sikri for forty rupees (about £2, 10s.), leaving at eight in the morning and returning about five.

This was not much over what the price of a carriage would have been. The motor, too, was comfortable and almost new. It had been sold by a gentleman because his wife said it squeaked. We had breakfast early, and took our luncheon with us. My friends were the honeymoon couple, who had passed the stage of wanting nothing but their own society. We thus enjoyed our

drive extremely, and the Parsee driver was excellent. Whatever a Parsee attempts he does well. This man understood the capacity which goats, bullocks, and camels possessed of getting in our way, and remaining for ever afterwards an obstacle. He made allowances for natives and their dogs while passing through villages. Some cursed, others salaamed, trying to propitiate the evil spirit. The oxen hid their heads in the ditch, sticking their loaded carts out across the road. Camels stampeded away into the desert, goats ran about before us, dogs tried to commit suicide, and fakirs did their best to be run over, but our man understood his machine and the country so well that my heart did not once stop beating. It was cool driving at that hour, and we had no dust, for there had been a thunder shower the day before. When I saw the scenery I felt happy at having spent a few extra rupees on quick going. Mud-coloured villages, mud-coloured flat plains, and mud-coloured distances, the twenty-six miles was almost a dead level, with a row of trees on each side. Some of these latter having died, little ones had been planted behind clay ramparts to protect them from the porcupines. Akbar had made this road, which ran to its destination in a perfectly straight line, and with

none of the twists and turns belonging to civilisation about it.

We reached the dak bungalow, Fatehpur-Sikri, after a cool, refreshing hour spent in getting there. Entering by the Agra Gate, we passed through heaps of stones to Akbar's record office, Daftar Khana, now turned into a rest-house for travellers. I daresay much of the red-sandstone building is new, but the goblin-head carved water-shoots are quite antique. A large sitting-room and some bedrooms looked very comfortable, and the beds seemed capable of affording tired tourists a little rest. The charge is one rupee for twenty-four hours, or eightpence for half a day. Numerous small tips are expected by ragged men who hang about, draw water, and sweep the floors. There is also a superior sort of servant who keeps a corkscrew, and is able to pull out a cork.

In the verandah a judge was holding his court. He wore a sola topee, and sat smoking, his feet resting on the table. All the country round seemed to be in attendance to give evidence or chat over the case. Our driver, being master of the language, enjoyed following the proceedings immensely, and told us afterwards what it was all about. It appeared that three men had stolen a calf, killed and ate it, as owing to the failure of the

monsoon they were in a state of famine. They pleaded guilty to the charge, saying, "Was it not better to steal than to die?" The judge's sympathies were with them, but he had to see how justice could be done, and the wronged parties appeased.

We left them all squatting round discoursing. I do not see how that case could ever come to an end; so to speak, it went into chancery there and then.

Fatehpur-Sikri is built of red sandstone. It is a beautiful ruin in good repair. The royal inhabitants seem to have only just left the palace. Somehow it resembles Pompeii, perhaps because you can so easily people those deserted houses once more. It is a huge place with contrary kinds of courts, doors, and turnings. A guide is necessary, as the uninitiated might wander round, and after exhaustingly hot rambles find themselves no forwarder with their sight-seeing.

A quite superior guide took possession of us, dismissing without demur his imbecile brother, who had simply stalked on before us pointing out the way, like a bicycle sign-post. He explained to us that his relative was never used unless during a great press of business.

The guides at Fatehpur are quite unique. They are

descended from the saint Sheikh Salim Chisti, who lived and is buried here. Legend states that he sacrificed his child that Akbar's son and heir might live, but his kinsman doubted the tale. He said it was all due to the power of the prayers of the holy man, who once dwelt alone here in the dreary desert. Akbar built himself a little accommodation to be near him, which is the reason given by historians for the foundation of this town.

Our guide was a great admirer of Akbar. He wore us off our legs and addled our brains with fabulous reminiscences, and did not save himself or us the least bit in the world. He told us Akbar was a great man and clever; that he studied everybody's religion and buttered them up all round. They must all have been a very simple, good kind of people in those days.

The ladies of the harem had plenty of exercise, I should think, if they walked about half as much as we did.

Behind the dak bungalow is the house of Bir Bal, a most complete place with up-stair rooms, wearingly high steps, holes for money and jewels, verandahs, balconies, carvings, and pierced stone screens, all a red brown. Bir Bal was a Brahmin minstrel who became a kind of

poet-laureate. Some say Akbar married his daughter and lived here.

The fine Diwan-i-âm (Hall of Public Audience) was a sight from the portico, with sides of pierced stone once containing the emperor's throne or judgment-seat, where, sheltering from the sun in the arched corridors round the court, petitioners waited to be heard. It must have been a somewhat different scene from that which had met us on our arrival. A door at the back of the throne communicated with a perfect town of private palaces. The Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience) is quaint. On a high, most elaborately carved pillar in the centre of the hall had sat the king or prime minister. Narrow passages radiated from this to the four corners reserved for councillors or lawyers. Underneath stood the people with a grievance, appealing for justice to the puss-in-the-corner arrangement over their heads. Very steep steps in the thickness of the wall gave access to the top of this pillar of the law.

Tradition states that one of Akbar's wives was a Christian, but our guide did not believe it. He said the report was started by the fact that one of his ladies was called Miriam, meaning Mary of the Age. This

name is often given to Mohammedan women in honour of the mother of our Lord.

He showed us a fresco which he said people mistook for the Angel of the Annunciation playing on a harp. He explained it as something else, and as I could see nothing at all I left it so. He was a most attentive guide, helping us up and down steep places, a pleasant, romantic, enthusiastic man.

Akbar built a sumptuous palace for the mother of his only son. It was called Jodh Bai's Palace. Round a large quadrangle are numerous verandahs, corridors, and rooms. She had reception-halls, and a Hindu temple all for her own use. Akbar must by this time have invented his religion, which, I suppose, she did not see her way to adopt. Other queen consorts had other isolated residences, one of them was called House of the Turkish Sultana, and contained but one room surrounded by a verandah. Our guide raved about it, and would not let us proceed until we had admired the immense quantity of trees, animals, birds, and flowers carved over the walls. The Hakim baths were extensive hydropathic establishments, embellished with much ornamental plaster-work like that sometimes met with among the ruins of ancient Rome. The Panch Mahal seemed a kind

of life-size toy-house. Each little pillared platform was something smaller than the preceding one. There was just standing-room on the last. It was planned on the system of a child's house of cards, and the hundred sandstone pillars necessary for its construction were all carved and shaped differently. Akbar had a beautiful invention in his bedroom. When I saw it I really believed him to have been a clever man. He had had a platform erected eight feet from the floor, and on this his bed was placed, no wall being built between him and the only wind that ever blows at Fatehpur. A screen of damp kus kus cooled and scented the breeze. It is believed the Great Moguls knew how to make themselves comfortable.

In the centre of a court a pachisi-board had been marked out with inlaid marble on the pavement. Slave-girls were the pieces. It seemed a nice kind of game in hot weather for all but the slave-girls.

We saw arcades of stables where horses had been tied by the fore and hind legs to rings. This fashion still exists in India. Rows of handsome animals viewed like this, in an unbroken line, must have been a fine sight. The ruins remain of the hospital which Akbar allowed the Jesuit Fathers to build in the city.

The Hathi Pol, or Elephant Gate, disappointed me; the animals had been made only of pieces of stone stuck together; now most of the pieces are missing. After the Mysore Bull, carved out of a single rock, they seem poor specimens of sculpture.

We investigated ruined water-works, and all kinds of things. A tower called Hiran Minar is joined to the palace by a secret passage. Akbar built it in honour of a favourite elephant. It bristled all over with tusks, and resembled an oddly-shaped porcupine. Our guide told us it was used by the ladies of the harem, who liked to sit there and enjoy the view. On our remarking that there was no view, he informed us that "there once had existed a lake beautiful exceedingly, the home of flowers and birds." I doubt it; his ancestor the saint must have caught sight of a mirage.

From the high buildings at Fatehpur I could see the Jumna trickling through the sand. It appeared like a river that had lost its way, and was wondering where it would go to.

There was not much fertility about that country. We came across a poor donkey prospecting among the stones, and hoping to find something to eat. Ever since Akbar's time the town has been inhabited, but no one

in affluent circumstances lives there, if we except the saint's descendants, though even they are going down in the world since Cook started personally-conducted tours, which bring them in no perquisites. We felt quite foolishly grand when our man told us he had taken round the present King of England when visiting India as the Prince of Wales. Our time was by no means spent wholly in talking ruins; we gossiped on the female question and religion. He said Mohammedan women would always be purdah. The Hindus having only copied this little custom of theirs, he thought it likely that eventually they would allow their females to wander about like the English ladies. The followers of Mohamet could never do this, he explained, "for with them it is a religion, not a fashion." He added that he did "not think much of the Christian faith; they all sang out of little books with their heads on one side, and their boots on; and why no hats for the men?" He was funny without knowing it, and enjoyed himself immensely in spite of the bad times.

We ended our tour by going through a high arch, so high that you forgot it was an arch. A poor man presented us with smelly, stalkless flowers from the

saint's grave, and we in return for the attention gave him twopence. This is the custom.

We found ourselves facing the Jâmi Masjid, or Cathedral Mosque, and surrounded by miles of marble. We had entered by the Emperor's Gate, and stood in a courtyard of arcades, at one side of which had been erected the tomb of Sheikh Salim. It was a square chamber hung with marble lace, an effect produced by piercing the stone at intervals with holes of different shapes and sizes. A priestly caretaker opened for us the doors of ebony and brass, allowing us inside to see a kind of wooden four-post bedstead, inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Here the saint lies buried. A special woman's entrance is on one side of the grave, and is reached from without by a covered passage. Once a year all ladies who are pining for children come here to implore the saint's help, for he is especially their patron. By way of gratitude they hang odds and ends of coloured stuff about, until the place looks like a rag-shop.

Before entering the mosque we had loose canvas overalls tied round our ankles. They were most uncomfortable, and as I shuffled along I feared they might come off and a sacrilegious bit of leather touch the pavement. Our guide held a high opinion of that mosque,

for he was a Mahommedan. He respected Jesus Christ as a good man—that was all; for him there was but one prophet.

The mosque was built in seven compartments. It appeared bare to us, and did not seem particularly devotional, but it is a grand bit of marble-work. The Gate of Victory, or Buland Darwazah, is a huge castellated tower, with views of Agra and endless desert from the top. It is a network of rooms, staircases, and passages. There are three doors, the central one being hung over with horse and donkey shoes. This is a simple native remedy, believed to cure the sick animals to whom the shoes belonged. Above the other two entrances Akbar caused the following inlaid inscription to be placed:—

"His Majesty King of Kings, Heaven of the Court, Shadow of God, Jalâl-ud-dîn Muhammad Akbar, Emperor. He conquered the Kingdom of the South, and Dandes, which was formerly called Khandes, in the 46th Divine Year (*i.e.* of his reign) corresponding to the Hijira year 1010 (A.D. 1602). Having reached Fatehpur-Sikri, he proceeded to Agra.

"Said Jesus, on whom be peace! The world is a bridge, pass over it, but build no house there. He who hopeth for an hour may hope for eternity, the world is but an hour, spend it in devotion, the rest is worth nothing."

And—

"He that standeth up in prayer, and his heart is not in it, does not draw nigh unto God, but remaineth far from Him. Thy best possession is what thou givest in the name of God; thy best traffic is selling this world for the next."

Our guide read and translated all this for us, which took time as we stood at the top of a precipice of steps leading down into a valley of ruins. I believe that some four years after the erection of this stone sermon poor Akbar died.

Having asked our conductor to get the inhabitants to change a rupee into coppers for us, we received a little sack-load of small coins each worth the eighth part of a farthing, nothing larger appearing to be in circulation here. We had coppers enough to last us for the rest of our lives, and to leave as curiosities to our descendants when we died.

Dying for something to drink, and extremely tired, we dismissed our conscientious Mahommedan, who dropped us at the dak bungalow for lunch. We enjoyed the liquid part of that meal excessively, and tried to quench our thirst with a concoction of lemonade and Pilsner beer, which I do not think an altogether ideal beverage. The man with a corkscrew opened the bottles for us, and we

had brought plates, glasses, knives and forks, so after making a good meal on various limbs of birds, cold potatoes, bread, and blocks of butter, we sallied forth once more, the husband and wife to dig for treasure, and I to sketch. I sat down under a sheltering arcade, opposite the ruined arched pavilion where Akbar was wont to argue over religion with Hindu fakirs, a pastime he loved. Beyond, near the surrounding wall and pillared niches of long-ago buildings, is the Ank Machauli, where the sportively inclined emperor played at hide-and-go-seek with his wives.

The sun was setting, the wind cooling, the treasure found when we prepared to set about our return to Agra. Our souls longed for a cup of tea. The treasure did not prove to be much; just pieces of broken blue porcelain enamel with which the domed roofs had once upon a time been covered. Buildings can no longer be embellished so, for posterity has forgotten the secret of its manufacture.

Along the verandah outside my bedroom door at Agra sat men selling coloured photos, post-cards, tables made of stag horns, brass candlesticks, and embroidered peacocks. Every time I went out I was pounced upon, and on returning nearly torn to pieces. One day I slipped off early and went shopping by myself. I spent more, perhaps, than was altogether wise, but I had a real nice time in a little shop,

the proprietor of which did not pay the hotel manager forty rupees to render my life a burden.

The work at Agra is beautiful. They embroider peacocks in a most fascinating manner. They also possess a happy-go-lucky way of working in blocks of gold and silver, sprinkled about with jewels. Things can generally be bought more cheaply at a good shop than from peddlers, even after bargaining yourself into a state of collapse. But it is ideal to spend a hot morning in a cool verandah surrounded by all kinds of lovely things, an easy-going hawker squatting at your feet.

One evening we drove over the pontoon bridge to visit the tomb of Itmad-ud-Daulah. The bridge is not level, for the river has dwindled away, and the buoys have ceased to float. They stick up here and there in the mud, making what I should call a hilly crossing, and the poor bullocks have great difficulty in getting their loads ashore. Here, for the first time, I saw water-buffaloes working in carts. They have no humps, and appear weak; their poor necks, too, often looked very sore.

After practising a little patience and paying one rupee, we struggled over to the opposite shore during a lull in the traffic. I saw a cloud rising above the river, and asked Ponnepan if he thought it would rain. He answered:

"No much drop," and as I did not understand what he meant without thinking it over, I drove on. However, when we arrived at the fine arched gateway of the Mausoleum the sky had grown as black as ink. The man unharnessed the horses, and got them and himself into shelter, whilst we ran up the paved way to the tomb of the Taj ladies' grandfather. Against a background of black cloud, and with the sun shining on it, it looked like the sugar ornamentation of a wedding cake. It struck us as small after the gigantic things we had seen. Every little detail is finished in a complete, childish sort of way. This mausoleum was built by Nur Mahal, and is a nice, tidy, feminine bit of work standing in a grass garden, red sandstone walls all round, and pavilions by the river, where one gets a view of Agra, a thing of beauty at that distance.

The thunder rumbled, and it grew quite dark as we peered through pierced marble screens surrounding Itmad-ud-Daulah's and many other people's carved coffins. Feeling brave in a building which had passed through so many generations of disturbances and storm, I came out and stood in the arched doorway facing the river, watching lightning, of all colours and shapes, flashing like a grand display of fireworks. The parrots flew backwards and forwards, screaming with terror; and the rain, how it

poured! every drop seemed to contain a bucket of water.

Our feet got quite wet walking back to the carriage, for although the clouds soon rolled away, and the sun shone once more, pools had collected all over the old paved terrace. Every person we met going home had got wet, but their scant clothing would not take long to dry.

Another evening we drove out to the Chini-ka-Roza (China Tomb), built in the reign of Aurangzib, and covered with glossy enamel in lovely shades of green and blue. Quantities had fallen off, and lay mingled with the gravel around.

There were beautiful views by the river, the sandstone remains of summer-houses, and beyond, the Emperor Babar's garden, the Ram Bagh, once an elegant and regularly planned pleasure-ground. Little pink roses—such tiny things!—grew about near patches of vegetables. Children ran after me offering bunches, and receiving with joy a copper. Poor flowers! they fell to pieces almost before I reached home.

It would not have been right to leave Agra without seeing the great Akbar respectably buried; so I drove to Sikandra, along a flat road which did not seem quite uninteresting, for buildings and queer ruins appeared in the sand;

also some trees and even patches of green stuff growing. The horses drew up, slipping about on a species of paved terrace, where I dismounted, and entered a huge red-sandstone tower of a gateway inlaid and ornamented in an eccentric sort of manner. The inscription reads as follows, and is in Persian: "Completed by the Emperor Jahangir, in the seventh year of his reign" [1613 A.D.].

Preceded by the ragged and aged gentleman in charge, I mounted the gate, trudging up miles of steep sandstone steps, the guide in front and Ponnepan behind, until at last we reached a broad, flat roof, having built upon it little ornamental pavilions and four high white minarets, which stuck up into the sky like magnified candles. One realised the size of that gateway after seeing all the monuments it accommodated without crushing them up against one another in the least. I did not climb the minarets, as I had a fine view of everywhere without going any higher. The mausoleum proper stands in the centre of an extensive park grown with handsome trees, some of them having bright red flowers. It is enclosed by high castellated walls. There are four gateways, one for use and three for beauty, two of them being mere ruins terribly out of repair. A high, broad, paved stone terrace runs to the tomb from all the

entrances, real and pretended. I walked up one of these. In times gone by straight bands of shallow water had lain on all of them, breaking out occasionally into artificial waterfalls carved with little make-believe ripples.

Another and a superior sort of guide took charge of us at the tomb, while a hanger-on procured a light. The mausoleum proper is a huge building of sandstone, which appears to have a photographer's glass-house at the top. This is in reality a unique marble chamber, which must be examined to be appreciated. The entrance-hall is decorated with beautifully Moorish-looking raised and coloured plaster-work, in red, blue, and gold now somewhat faded. A notice hangs here requesting gentlemen to remove their boots and hats before entering the underground building, where Akbar is in reality buried. Ladies need not undress, therefore I followed the torch-bearer as I was, down a hill through a narrow, dark passage. The vault seemed to me out of the way large and lofty; both walls and ceiling being apparently far away lost in space. Weird echoes answered every sound, and only a dim lamp lighted the perfectly plain coffin of white marble, on which was carved the one word "Akbar."

Before leaving this building I had a very wearing

expedition round cloisters and through passages up stairs. Fatigue blunted my observing powers, and I retain but a dim memory of surprises in red sandstone. Arriving at the top, I discovered the photographer's studio to be a marble square open to the sky. The marble was used in blocks only for the pavement, all the surrounding walls had been pierced until they resembled the net ladies buy for veils, and there was an assortment of forty different patterns. I walked round and round consumed with wonder.

In the centre of this large space, and elaborately carved, stands Akbar's pretended coffin. Near it is a little upright monument wonderfully ornamented, where, so legend says, once rested the famous Koh-i-Noor. A few remarks from Akbar's own invented religion have been carved here in marble. They are: "God is Great," and "Magnificent is His Glory."

More people are buried in the open arcades below; they are very royal, but uninteresting. I wandered about in the park for a bit, investigating the best preserved of the three ornamental gateways, dotted all over with a kind of mosaic inlaying. I saw a sweet mother monkey and her baby sitting on the wall, watching the greedy father having a good feast on the only fruit in the garden. He

would not share it with them, but they waited on, hoping that he might not be able to finish it all. I drew Ponnepan's attention to the disagreeable character of that parent, but I do not think it made much impression on him. "Monkeys were all very much bad people," he told me. I could not quite make out what he meant. I never knew what were Ponnepan's religious views. He saluted my paraffin lamp every evening after putting it on the table. He was very much impressed by what he saw in the north, and thanked me for having given him no end of a good time. His exact words I have forgotten, but that was the meaning of them. Akbar's grave filled him with the wildest enthusiasm. He thought him a kind of god.

In an arcaded chamber above the gate, a balcony, is shown, from which was sounded at dawn a kind of Eastern roll-call of the dead.

Before leaving Agra I was treated to a dust-storm. The scenery of sun-dried mud-coloured walls and houses only wanted this finishing touch of a mud-coloured sky to render it unredeemably dreary. A dust-storm is a disagreeable thing. Gritty sand settles in your eyes, ears, nose, and mouth; your clothes get powdered with it and your temper ruffled by it. Longfellow might call the

"days dark and dreary," but he would have to leave out cold.

One day I saw cartloads of native holiday-makers coming in from the country. They were playing music, and singing, and had dressed themselves up in what looked like red and yellow glazed calico. There was much coloured tissue-paper frilly ornament on their clothes, and the bullocks, although terribly loaded, were beautifully decorated. Such is life.

A pompous middle-aged gentleman sat at a table near mine. Some time before I left, a German traveller arrived, who did not seem to understand our language, but his *vis-à-vis*, raising his voice, talked slowly and impressively, as if to wake him up and compel his comprehension in spite of himself. He made many remarks; this one I remember.

"There are two things to see in India, in fact, the *things* to see. One is the Taj. There is no other Taj in the world, my dear sir. When you have been gratified by the sight of this beautiful building, then go to the Himalaya Mountains. It may be far to travel, but you will be repaid; repaid, my dear sir, by seeing not one mountain, but miles of mountains under snow."

CHAPTER XII

BOMBAY AGAIN

I SHALL always look back on my journey to Bombay as eventful — not that we had a railway accident or anything of that sort; only my fellow-passenger happened to be uncommon, and an experience. I found her in the train at Agra. She had come from some place very far north, and was going to the extreme south. At first I thought there would not be room for me in the carriage, but eventually I squeezed myself in amongst her many belongings, and when once started and settled down I had time to admire my surroundings. The car was perfectly new, full of the latest improvements and contrivances, all out of order; even the extremely scientific tap for filling the wash-hand basin did not work.

I had noticed a wonderfully got-up elderly lady on the Agra platform. She had trimmed her sola topee with rosettes of grey ribbon. It had a weird effect. I remarked her sitting on a station chair absorbed in an

eightpenny novelette. These delightful volumes are to be had sometimes in India for twopence more than you would pay in England, to cover the cost of importing, I suppose.

My travelling companion slept at first, but after a bit I noticed she became uneasy. At last, with a fine access of courage she "wondered would I object to her smoking." I smiled and answered "No," and I saw at once her fashionable heart was at rest. She seemed to employ her time as follows: A sleep, dressing, eating, and a smoke; dressing, more smoking, reading a few pages of the *Smart Set*, sleep, and the same thing repeated with various alterations. She was not handsome, but an hour spent in settling her hat at the right angle worked wonders in her appearance. She seemed kind, easy-going, and good-natured; to me she was an amusing study. At Jhansi I got out to have luncheon, and on returning found Ponnepan hovering about my belongings like a hen with ducklings. After twenty-four hours' thought, the authorities had realised that a carriage of so many failures might not be paradise, and had therefore resolved (without giving us notice) to remove it and substitute another. I thus found all my things on the loose, wandering about the platform.

My fellow-passenger soothed her feelings with a cigarette, leaving the poor, tired ayah to swear if she were able. I remarked the fat lady with the ornamental topee, sitting on her bundle of bedding, her soul still lost in the novelette, whilst strewn around were spirit-lamps, kettles, and other odds and ends; but she showed no interest in anything except her book, and read on absorbed to the end.

The railway officials having at last cleared us and our goods off the platform, the train jogged along once more. I was nearly left behind trying to rescue my soap, which was remaining under the care of a majestic-looking coolie. What value would life have without soap during a railway journey in India?

We dined in a hooked-on refreshment-car. It was a very complete dinner, and my companion made for it a very complete toilet, which occupied her for a whole hour. She slept well, wrapped in a soft, cashmere lamb's-wool rug. I should have envied her that wrap in a cold climate. I was up and away to the breakfast-saloon next morning, leaving my fellow-traveller and her distracted ayah rooting out all kinds of garments from different sorts of boxes. I had my meal with the sola topee lady, who did not favour me with

much conversation. The novelette was still in her hand, and between the courses was breathlessly resumed. On my return I found the wildest confusion reigning in the carriage; the untidiness I had left was order to what I found. The lady had lost the purse which contained her ticket for miles and miles of travel. I hunted about, finding it at last among my things, and though I have not the character of being a kleptomaniac, things looked badly for me.

It became oppressively hot in the ghât before Bombay was reached, at about twelve, midday. My lady here got herself up in a lovely arrangement of pure white, which she found hard to preserve immaculate in the dusty carriage. This last change of garb took her ages, and predisposed her to a heat intense. I shall always remember her, uncomfortably seated for fear of getting crushed, a cigarette in one hand, a powder-puff in the other, vainly trying to cool off.

A young man was in attendance at Bombay; one of those household pets so much the fashion in India. I heard them order the driver to take them to the Taj Mahal Hotel. This is a stately palace by the sea, easily mistaken for a university. I myself went to visit

friends, and later on had dinner there. It was an establishment for the Rivièra, not India. I did not care for it; there was no Eastern charm about its hugeness. Large squares of passages had little steps lying in wait to break people's necks. Big, elaborate bathrooms, round which most of the hotel waiters congregated, and met you in bathing *déshabille.* Somewhere in the front garden an oil-engine worked a dynamo; this machine joined in the conversation. The dinner was cold and poor, but all the dishes rejoiced in beautiful French names. But the Taj is *the* hotel of Bombay; fashion says so.

After having had lunch at the Yacht Club with acquaintances, I dismissed Ponnepan, paying his passage back to Madras. Before leaving he presented to me a brittle clay scorpion, covered over with damp paint of various colours. I cannot say I have it still. When wishing me good-bye, he implored to be recommended to all my touring friends. Should any one feel inclined to engage him, his address is: Ponnepan, Madras. He seemed to think it sufficient.

Having received and accepted an invitation to stop with friends made during the voyage out, I had a very pleasant few days in Bombay, down Mazagon way, in

a large house cooled by breezes from the sea. We often sailed about the harbour, too, in the warm afterglow.

One morning a Ceylon merchant peddler known to my hostess arrived. He always came once a year, carrying a fascinating pack of lace, and some jewels next his heart. Ceylon makes a pillow lace which wears out your memory of it. Unhappily the workers now try to imitate European patterns, hoping to secure a better sale.

Our traveller was an intelligent-looking fellow, who spent his time trudging backwards and forwards over half a continent. His conversation would have been most interesting had his English not been so imperfect. I bought some lace, and a pretty little sapphire ring.

I paid a last visit to my pet Bombay shop, a place of happy hours and delightful memories, kept by a tall, handsome-looking native, a reader of characters and a doer of business. I was told he could be depended upon, and always found him reliable. On informing him that I was leaving, he thought a bit and said, "Good-bye, and God bless you!" It was a kind of holy wish he imagined I might understand, for my custom had won his heart.

One evening a rich millionaire Parsee (who turns the

paving-stones into gold) invited us to dinner. He had built himself a home on a mangrove-fringed island opposite Elephanta, but the sea-flats having been raised and filled, it is now connected with the mainland, being only an island of tradition. Mr. D—— had adapted an old Mahratta fort for his residence, adding detached buildings round about as he required shelter. His palace could be seen from the harbour, a blazing glow of electric light at night.

It had at first been arranged that we should sail round by the sea-shore, ponies meeting us at the landing-stage to take us up the hill, but it was afterwards settled that his two motors should convey us by land, in order to show me a little of the country; so one fine evening, before the light had failed, the cars arrived. I am extremely nervous, but felt no fear when sitting behind a driver like Mr. D——. He knew just what his machine could do; also all the wonders in the way of obstruction a pair of bullocks and a native driver can achieve. After passing through busy dock roads, we found ourselves in lovely suburbs by the sea. Quaint buildings and luxurious vegetation surrounded us, tinted and beautiful in the evening light. I remarked a dogcart and trotting cob waiting by the way. These belonged to Mr. D—— and

were ready to carry us to our destination should the motors fail, as they have a trick of doing so often. There was also a telephone, to which he could be connected, summoning thousands to our rescue. Mr. D—— told us that the chauffeur might clean his machine, but he allowed no one but himself to drive, and that when he could not do so, bullocks towed it home.

The country village dogs had a terrible dislike to us, some stupidly attacking the car in front. One poor thing was run over in this manner. I do not know if we killed it outright, but in any case the following motor put it out of suffering. On an extensive maidan, waiting vultures had perched on and destroyed most of the palm-trees. This is the bullocks' last resting-place, where the poor, dead creatures are left to be eaten. Our drive here for a period was slightly unpleasant.

I remember passing through cliffs of firewood stacked and cut ready for use. The seven miles of avenue leading to Mr. D——'s house is but a cart track, and it required nice steering to keep out of the ruts. We bounded here and there over partially levelled ditches (it felt like going across country in Ireland), and eventually taking a sharp turn we faced the hill on which the Mahrattas had once built their fort. I wondered would the machine be able

to climb such an ascent; but without demur, Mr. D—— changing the gear, pushed slowly forward. Suddenly, when half-way up, down went the brake with a bang! The motor stopped, and so did my heart for the moment. Mr. D—— raised his hand, and in an instant the bushes seemed to rain coolies, who, getting round the car, forced it onward to the top of the hill. We all alighted in safety, prepared to see wonders. A. P. & O. officer friend of our host's showed me round. He was a pleasant guide, knowing his ground and never once losing his way. The kitchen was a completely isolated mansion; a berthed apartment off it, the cooks' sleeping accommodation. When more space is wanted on the hill-top, a terrace wall is built from the shore below, and the cavity filled with clay from the slope behind. Only good is done by reclaiming those fever-giving, mangrove-growing shallows by the sea.

The stables were situated in a detached courtyard, where beautiful, fast-trotting cobs revelled in draughty loose boxes. A roomy building with marble steps and window sills contained an oil-engine, I forget of what horse-power. It looked large, and worked a dynamo for making the electric light. Bachelors were accommodated in an airy dove-cot, reached by a pretty winding stair

case. Married couples had commodious rooms (with bath and dressing apartments) opening off a fine, long, screened verandah. These rooms were large and high, decorated like reception saloons are at home, and lighted with rows and rows of electric lamps. This is to be understood when we remember that India is a country where light is god. A huge cistern on the roof supplied the whole place with water, which was raised from an inexhaustible well by a Persian wheel. There were flat house-tops reached by winding stairs in little towers, where you could see lovely sights in the way of scenery, and hear the sea murmuring to the mangrove trees. There was a gymnasium for the worship of Sandow's statue and exercises. Sandow had taken Bombay and most of India by storm, hitting the right nail of native disease on the head, so to speak. He cured Mr. D——, who gratefully presented him with a £10,000 fee.

The Fort proper has walls so thick and solid that the builder cannot tamper with them; he must just adapt his apartments to the spaces he finds. Entering a small hall, the dining-room faces you, the walls being lined with handsome cabinets as thick as they can cluster. In these are kept china worth a king's ransom, for we ate our dinner off porcelain which in England spends its

time in idleness and safety. Off the hall, and opposite a small pantry, little winding stairs, lighted by glazed loop-holes, lead one above. Bedrooms open on to a kind of boudoir landing, communicating with a flat terrace, a soothing place of lovely sights and sounds, soft carpetry, and many cushions. In an airy tower was a sweet little den, all view and sea breeze, now fitted with a lounge, &c., but once the shelter of some anxious Mahratta on the look-out for enemies or possible victims. The bedrooms were wonderful apartments, being a square some sizes larger than the roomy bed standing in the centre of the floor. The walls were almost completely composed of windows, some of the lower ones, filled with kus kus grass, having wooden shutters. The rooms were delightfully cool, slightly resembling the deck-cabin of a ship. Off each one of them was a comfortable dressing-room, and a most complete bathing establishment with water laid on. Sheets of bevelled looking-glass reached from floor to ceiling. We took off our hats and dust-cloaks, amazed at the degree of comfort to be attained by the judicious arrangement of a fortified ruin. The view of sea, sky, and rocky shores of Elephanta was a thing to haunt you in your sleep, tinging dreams with memories of the ever beautiful. On all the beds were six pillows:

these and lights seem to be the love of a Parsee's life. We sat on a terrace ideally laid out, and drained of all superfluous moisture in a wonderful manner. Huge globes of light hung from high pillars, illuminating our surroundings as the moon's rays might have done. Mr. D—— enjoyed it all with us, a telephone at his elbow. When the bell tinkled, he would break off conversation with a polite excuse, make some jabbering remarks, and resume the thread of his discourse as if nothing had happened. A man of such huge business undertakings must enjoy his pleasures as he can, and wherever he sat down a noiseless attendant placed that terrible little machine by his side. He seemed to have a complete staff of perfectly trained servants, and there was a beautifully got-up creature in uniform, something like that worn by the Mahratta chiefs of old, who mounted guard on the ramparts above the entrance gate.

We were treated to the kind of dinner one reads of in the "Arabian Nights." The table decorations consisted of a bank of artificial flowers, resembling the millinery department at the Louvre. Electrically-lighted butterflies hovered amongst the blossoms, and miniature motor-cars rolled about with the menu. We had champagne and liqueur out of gold glasses. The china

was a dream, every fork a work of art, and the spoons were fit for fairyland. Mr. D——, being a Parsee, drank no wine, but he took his water out of a champagne glass, with a perfect politeness which some temperance people, who cannot resist supplying guests with their views and their liquor together, might well imitate.

I tasted here at dessert the mango for the first time. It was a very good one, with an indescribable flavour and the appearance of a custard pudding. It is eaten out of its hard skin like an egg. During the season one can buy mangoes, but they have generally the flavour of turpentine. People who live in the East get mangoes on the brain, and live but to eat them.

I was rather disappointed with Indian fruit on the whole. Small yellow plantains or bananas are good, but they get over ripe while you pause to consider will you have another.

Pappia has the appearance of a melon, and very little flavour. A melon has no taste at all. Peaches are composed of very thick skin and very large stones. Pine-apples seem fibrous and dry, something like a coir-mat. The dorian I have never tasted; people say it

is good, but you have to eat it sniffing smelling-salts, for the scent is extremely disagreeable and overpowering. Of course, during the rest of the year there may be lovely things, but these I have never tasted, and no one I met seemed able to describe them.

After dinner we sat on the terrace, Mr. D—— providing the gentlemen with cigarettes, though, being a fire-worshipper, he did not smoke himself. Late, through the pitch-dark night, he drove us home. The only light anywhere seemed to come from our incandescent lamps, yet he fled along that cart-track avenue at a rollicking pace, and I am still alive to write this tale. He took us back by flats which were being reclaimed from the sea, the car hopping over what seemed to be ploughed ground. The work goes on day and night, in fact more by night, as there is less traffic then. Lines and lines of bullock-carts passed and repassed, carrying loads of clay to bank up behind the walls built to push back the sea step by step. It gradually retreats after making a hard fight for its home in the fever-haunted mangrove swamps. Countless lights outline the road, making one almost forget the darkness beyond.

I brought many useless things to India with me, leaving behind much I wanted. Dark blue cottons or

lustres are the best travellers. After journeying in a white dress, you arrive looking like a stoker. Silk blouses are more serviceable than linen; they soil less easily, and protect from chill. Very thin flannel sleeping-suits are almost, but not quite, a necessity. After a frying night a refreshing coolness creeps in with the morning, in that climate, perhaps bringing death with it. You are tired and too dead asleep to feel the chill and take precautions. Of course, a blanket is then quite protection enough if one were certain not to kick it about the floor.

Get the very lightest, best-fitting, most expensive sola topee. They sell wonderful bargains in India, made of timber and covered with white tarpaulin. These are instruments of torture, and eventually wear every bit of hair off your head.

If there is packing to be done, try and get all finished before breakfast. It is a good thing to have your riding-habits padded to protect your backbone (which is as susceptible to heat as one's head) from the sun.

Fashionable India is most fashionably dressed, but they wear their garments out, not being able to procure variety. You begin to talk of an acquaintance with a cherry-coloured dress as the "red lady." Thus there

is a kind of safety in black and white clothes. Shoes and gloves should be large. In dry weather dhobies return your linen beautifully white, the sun doing half their work. If you fear disease germs among your things, let them lie out baking through the hot noonday hours. Dust is everywhere, and gets into your very brain; you take it home to Europe in the lining of your dresses. Bring always a plentiful supply of your own pet kinds of pins, needles, tape, veils, and gloves; in India these things are worth their weight in gold, and are often not to be had even for that. Unless you mean to spend years in the East, do not take tin-lined trunks; they only add to the weight of your luggage. Those of compressed cane protected by wooden battens are light, travel beautifully, and people say white ants do not rave about them. It is a great blessing to have your name in full painted on all your luggage; guards will then keep it together, and it is easily collected. Unlike their professional European brethren, the Indian porters are very gentle in their methods, and do not fling the things about more than is necessary. My trunks were less battered during a voyage East than while travelling in the Rivièra.

CHAPTER XIII

HOME

ALL Europe had got the plague scare badly just about the time we were preparing to leave Bombay. The P. & O. Co. had issued little notices with the tickets, to the effect that we must be on Ballard Pier punctually at eleven o'clock, in order to enable the health officers to examine those who wished to leave, and provide them with passports.

Cook collected all my luggage before dawn, and I was left with nothing but an umbrella and a hand-bag to look after. My friends drove down to see me off, and had a dreary wait on the landing-stage, where a queer little dwarf went round collecting coppers, which waiting passengers gave freely, being rather glad to get rid of them.

By a rare piece of good luck, two people who had come out in the *Mooltan* with me were now going home again, and we were happy at meeting as old friends are who come across one another once more. It was

funny to see the different resident Europeans, with garlands of strongly scented white flowers and gilt oranges hanging round their necks, and reaching almost to their waists. They smelt like walking stove-houses, but had to stick to their decorations for fear of hurting the feelings of kind natives, who had presented them with these little tokens of affection.

After an endless dawdle, the tiny passport-office (bathing-machine) doors were opened, and a lady doctor, having felt my pulse, asked me how to spell my name, finally providing me with a voluminous document, which the head steward and ship's doctor amused themselves with for ever afterwards.

My friends remaining on the shore could now only wave to me, and I waved back to them from the tender as we sat waiting to start for home. We were not returning in a straight through ship, having taken our passages on the *Oriental*, an intermediate steamer running to Aden, where we were to tranship, continuing our journey in the *Mooltan*, homeward bound from Australia.

I found it hard to settle all my things in the little cabin I shared with another lady. It was small and we were large, and our belongings even larger. We were to spend four days reaching Aden, so it was worth while

trying to shake down into something like comfort. The music-saloon, so called, was at the head of the companion, with a piano lashed to the stair railing, but the deck space felt roomy and comfortable. The ship was a very old one. In the dining-saloon waved the antique canvas punka, worked by "boys" from the deck. The steward told me that the English staff run backward and forward for two years, and then get a holiday trip to England.

Every one wore the happy "We are all going home" expression, and they generally slept all day in different comical attitudes on deck. One gentleman said he did not know what he should do when his twenty-four hours' sleeping-power gave out.

I had charming people next me at table, and as there was not a great mob of us, it felt like an extra pleasant kind of family party. One young fellow told me he was travelling home to be married, in fact he was not happy talking of anything else. He had an ugly, good-humoured face, but his loud, happy laugh rang through the ship, and warmed every one's heart. On his wedding-day he would acquire a father and mother in law, two uncles, and five aunts, but this did not seem to cloud his rosy future, for he was an orphan with

hardly any relatives. He was not like the man who was heard to remark, "God gave me my relations, but thank goodness I can choose my own friends."

There was a gentleman on board with a sick wife, no nurse, and a just-beginning-to-walk baby boy to claim his attention. He buckled a rug-strap round the infant's waist, and promenaded the decks with the little bare-footed creature, keeping him well exercised and amused. A child who met him thus employed wanted to know "why he liked playing horses so much?" It is astonishing to see what wonders a man can achieve when in a desperate predicament.

One fryingly hot night, orders came from the bridge to close the ports as the sea was rising, A kind watchman opened them for us again at two o'clock in the morning, when it was calm once more. It had been hot!

After leaving Bombay I only felt slightly ill for a short time, and was never really quite unhappy. Nearly every one else slept themselves back into a state of health, and got quite light-headed, they felt so strong.

As we ran through the Strait of Bab-el Mandeb to Aden, the shores looked as though covered with fine ashes. However, in the sunset light they appeared lovely, sailing as we did from the opposite side this time. Near

the water's edge grew bright green sea-weed, something like grass. A gentleman told me that in a cave he once caught and killed a kind of fish called a mermaid, for want of a better name. The male and young escaped, but the poor female was butchered. She appeared a most extraordinary-looking creature, so much so that he had it photographed. From a huge tail sprang a bust, short fins ending in hands of a sort. The thing's head was terribly human—face, nose, mouth, and ears—and in uncanny imitation of us, seal-fur grew low on the forehead, fearfully suggestive of human hair.

After the ship's doctor had played about for a bit with some other doctor, dinner being by this time finished, we prepared to tranship our different bundles and ourselves, clustered in a state of wild confusion. Some ladies took their places on the tender in evening dress and diamonds, not a pleasant get-up with a chilly sea-breeze blowing.

The Australians most kindly greeted our arrival with a cheer, which was nice of them, and quite won our hearts, for our coming would crush them out of all comfort. The noise and chaos following our advent beggars description. I wonder the purser did not commit suicide; his office was besieged and crammed with dissatisfied

passengers. One gentleman said his wife and he had been allotted a cosy corner near the engine-room, and as the cabin would be of very little use to them, they thought of presenting it to the stokers.

There were grown-up people who did not want children, and parents who preferred being without the grown-ups. Babies wandered on the loose with missing luggage, and the purser was requested to find them, &c.

After the scene of that night, I understood why that poor officer differs in so many ways from other men. He has the appearance of one for whom life holds no happiness, and sorrow cannot touch.

An Arab stole the strap of my hold-all, and I received the contents in detachments. A native of Aden will sell his soul to the devil for a bit of leather.

I found my cabin and belongings in the early morning. The steward remembered me, and his greeting was almost affectionate. He looked weary and worn. They find the six weeks' trip trying; everybody's temper becomes a little short when boxed up together for so long.

This time the *Mooltan* appeared to be a vast, floating nursery. Little boys and girls wandered about taking care of themselves; mothers and nurses mostly ill with fever,

and helpless. The babes spent one half of the day lovingly, and the other half tearing each other to pieces. Passengers sometimes interfered to prevent murder. Whenever I began to sketch, I was smothered by an admiring band who helped me with instruction and directions, imploring me "to use some more of that nice, juicy blue." Their cup of happiness was full, when allowed to assist me with my tin water-bottle.

There was a pretty little lonely boy, who crept about playing at being a pony. He told me that his mother had "gone on a visit to Jesus." He was travelling with his very devoted earthly father.

Whenever we went below for meals, the infants seized the opportunity of appropriating everybody's cushion, and making beds for themselves in some corner of the deck. For an hour it kept them out of worse mischief—maybe from falling overboard.

Some time before two boys had been drowned. They were sitting on the ship's rail, the steamer travelling along with a fresh sea. The captain, catching sight of them from the bridge, sent word to the purser to look up the parents. But his warning came too late, the boat gave a sudden lurch, and the boys fell backwards into the water. The ship had shot almost a mile ahead before she could

FROM THE MARINA, MADRAS

be stopped and a boat lowered, and by this time the lads were drowned.

I am glad to say there were no accidents during my time on board. I heard the following terrible story of a man, some of whose relations were sailing with us.

During a voyage out to the Cape, an officer (the man in question) suffered extremely from sea-sickness. After a time he crawled on deck, though the vessel still rolled horribly. He did not, however, feel well enough to go below with the other passengers for luncheon. He was never seen again, and there was no one about to give an account of what had happened. It is supposed that, feeling suddenly ill again, he leaned over the rail, and losing his balance with the roll of the ship, was pitched headlong into the sea.

There were many celebrities this time on the *Mooltan:* one of them was a fat lady with a tousled head of fair hair, generally dressed in robes of transparent real lace, and wearing about £10,000 worth of jewels. She did not appear in rough, cold, or gloomy weather, but the deck was strewn with a complete set of chairs for her use. The last I saw of her was posing on the deck at Plymouth, resplendent in heliotrope plush, lace and amethysts, having her photo taken by enthusiastic amateurs.

Among our passengers was a queer little man, his hair arranged in a single curl. He was a common little creature, but he had a great, uncommon love for a fine, dashing young woman, who wore a breastplate of diamonds, and got through an assortment of very unsuitable dresses in the day, her devoted husband packing and unpacking them for her, as she was but an indifferent sailor.

Every one examined with respect and awe a tall, thin girl who had had the plague. She was a walking skeleton, but still alive. I met people with a strong kind of ghostly likeness to friends I have known all my life, and I thought it quite uncanny, when a lady came up and told me I was the living image of her sister, who had been dead for some years. We naturally felt like relatives for the rest of the trip.

There were a number of young ladies of marriageable age, who walked the decks (until one felt giddy) with young men inclined to matrimony. I remarked a wedded couple always sitting silently side by side. They told me they were returning from a motor tour round the north of India, and had received a wonderful price for their car before leaving. When alone in each other's company they suffered from "motor silence," the lady having acquired the habit of not talking to the man at the wheel. She

told me many interesting tales, one being about the Maharajah of a native state, who had lately died. He married for love a beautiful princess, but she proving childless, he took another wife at her suggestion. A son was eventually born, which she (the first consort) adopted, the real mother living on in the palace a nonentity. When barely twenty-two the husband died, leaving the reigning wife a beautiful widow with thousands and thousands of pounds worth of dresses and jewels, which according to Hindu law she must never wear again, as she was obliged to spend the rest of her days in seclusion, sackcloth and ashes. Is it to be wondered at that she instantly started the "devil of an intrigue," that she plotted to poison the heir, marry an uncle, and to rule once again? On finding out how the land lay, the horror-stricken, helpless mother implored the Resident's aid. He at once removed the child, providing him with a separate establishment, where he could be safely guarded until he came of age to rule.

Our first day in the Red Sea was very hot, the wind blowing astern. The children ran about without boots or stockings, and extremely lightly clad.

Near tea-time on the 12th of April we passed slowly by the Seven Sisters. They are queerly-shaped, isolated, barren rocks out in the middle of the sea. I always regret

not having made a sketch of them. We waited off Suez for quite an hour, as the pilot did not come. I coloured a little drawing of the funny, flat town. The children tried to fall overboard, and passengers amused themselves watching the native boatmen, whom we had taken on board to tie us up in the canal, playing a very simple game in the waist of the ship. One man guessed, while blindfold, which of his companions had pulled his hair. They amused themselves in this way for a whole hour, and the interest of the passenger audience never flagged.

We entered the Canal towards evening. There was a most beautiful sunset, which I partly missed, having to dine early, being a late comer. I was kept well occupied attempting sketches on the greasy, glossy paper of birthday books; many people were, however, content with a signature on a very large photo of the *Mooltan*; this much could be satisfactorily accomplished.

The barber's shop was a small, fascinating place, one vast jumble of treasures from all parts of the world, mixed up with hairpins, combs, and other toilet necessaries. The easy-going, good-tempered barber allowed us to make hay and purchases all day if we liked, when once the gentlemen had been shaved and got rid of. I bought a Japanese hand-embroidered crape dress, and

a Spanish lace mantilla. My soul longed for an Australian 'possum rug, and there were some Chinese bronzes I should have liked, but the price was beyond the beyonds. Children always hung about the door buying pennyworths of sweets. They were most trying customers, and hard to please.

We arrived in the early morning at Port Said, dropping many Indian passengers for Brindisi, and taking on a number of English people returning from an Egyptian winter. We found it very hot on shore, in fact slightly overpowering, but we spent our morning in a dream of delight, shopping and drinking thick coffee provided for us gratis. I bought a beautiful ostrich-feather boa for very little, and helped a strange gentleman in the shop to make some purchases for a lady friend. I was much taken by figures from the pyramids, cut out in coloured stuff and stitched on to a light background.

Many of our ship companions hired donkeys, and tore through the streets looking foolish, frightened, and unsuitably dressed. Yelling donkey-boys gave them no time for thought or repose. After a bit we grew utterly exhausted, and went to the hotel to rest in a glass verandah with plenty of streety views

about it. We had an extremely good luncheon; the bedrooms, too, seemed clean and comfortable, opening on to little balconies above the street. In the afternoon, very weary, we returned to the ship. The decks were crowded with peddlers. A fat lady (the jewel celebrity) had bought £30 worth of goods, and was the centre of an admiring crowd. Every little girl seemed to have been presented with a beetle necklace, or a snake bracelet, and the tiny boys were out of temper and very much inclined to fight, as there had been no ornaments fit for them.

Hearing music, I leaned over the side of the ship to watch a boatload of strolling Europeans. Among the men were two girls who sang and played. One was young, so very young, with a thin, anxious-looking but beautiful face. Men threw shilling after shilling to her pathetic loveliness, so refined in a simple black dress, a large velvet bow on her bare head. A mountebank of an old father sang and bounded about, seeming much elated at the amount of money collected by the careworn young beauty in her open umbrella.

Soon after leaving Port Said we passed a huge floating dock going "somewhere foreign," as they say in Ireland. All traffic was to be stopped in the Suez

Canal to let it through, and for this there would be the slight charge of £10,000.

It got very rough passing near the mouth of the Adriatic, and I had to jam myself into my berth with pillows to prevent myself from being pitched out. Next day the boat still rolled, and the lonely, tiny boy crept to me saying, "Your little pony Topsey feels sick." After lying in my arms for a bit, wondering would it be nice to be a mermaid man under the waves, he fell asleep, and appeared all right when he awoke again.

One morning early we entered the Straits of Messina, passing between the Scylla and Charybdis rocks, so named in ancient times; the water swirled around most dangerously. Although the day was a bit hazy, one could plainly see the train running along the Italian shore. The children were most disappointed because the fog hid "the smoky mountain" (Mount Etna).

The Straits of Bonifacio were our next excitement, and some little mites, nicely got up in white, followed me to the bows. Whilst I watched the shore, they played telephones in the eight-feet-long ventilators, which had been taken down and were lying flat along the deck. Before I realised what they were doing, every one of them was as black as a sweep. The mothers

took it very calmly, only too delighted that nothing worse had happened.

On the 21st of April, early in the morning, we reached Marseilles flying the yellow flag, and anchored off Quarantine Island. Boats with other yellow flags came off, bringing with them a doctor, who boarded us. There was a report that the cabins were to be sealed up and fumigated, but nothing of the sort happened, and just as I was preparing to sketch Monte Cristo's Island a tug came off to tow us in. The people on board of her brought the terrible news of the earthquake at San Francisco. Some of our passengers had near relations in the doomed city, and their anxiety to get on shore and reach the telegraph office was fearful to behold.

Most of the passengers from India intended to land at Marseilles, so as not to return to England without the sun; and as our ship remained here for twenty-four hours, those who were going on in her had plenty of time for an extensive tour on shore.

The P. & O. Company get their washing, and many other things, done for them at this port. A lady showed me a wall of corn-sacks piled one on top of the other, and told me they were full of soiled

linen on the way to the laundry. But I had my doubts.

The monsoon broke almost immediately on our landing, and we were treated to torrents of rain, in showers which rather damped every one's enjoyment. The slight, light-coloured Indian shoes looked sadly out of place pattering over muddy crossings. We treated each other to different meals, and had a real good time in a fine hotel in the Rue-de-Noailles, an establishment patronised by the P. & O. Company passenger from times immemorial, and teeming with mail-steamer news. We devoured the papers, reading all about the San Francisco disaster, and then sallied out between the showers to buy hats. One lady bought twenty, but the average passenger was content with two. We thought ourselves very clever to get into a tram which dropped us at the door of l'Exposition Coloniale, just open, but which would not be finished for another six months. The rain came down unceasingly, and the paths were spongy morasses of yellow mud. We fled from building to building through the wet, and saw the wonders that could be made out of grass from Madagascar, and cork from somewhere else. A huge sun-dried clay Algerian fort took my fancy. It was very real, and covered plenty of

space, with loopholed walls and towers. Thatched verandahs supported by pillars of baked earth ran round some of the buildings. Merry soldiers in the uniform of the renowned African corps were sitting under a tent, and though the day was gloomy, their hearts were light at finding themselves once more in la belle France.

Getting tired of examining spoons made of wood, needles of bone, and clothing of something else, we followed the crowd—well, not exactly a crowd; just a collection of some few stragglers—and waited our turn to have a trip through Venice for a few centimes. I have been there in reality, but this tour was quite a novelty. We all got into a flat-bottomed tin bath, and were floated down a narrow water-way enclosed in a kind of canvas tunnel. When any one moved about in the boat to find their pocket handkerchief, &c., it made the other passengers feel ill. Every now and then the canvas covering gave way, and we were treated to a few stuffed pigeons, a paper water-lily, and cardboard scenes from St. Mark's Piazza. Somebody's pianola was playing in the distance, but despite this extra attraction we all agreed that a higher charge and shorter voyage would have been preferable.

The French have a very peculiar system about some

things. For instance, you are only allowed to enter some elaborate building by a little, insignificant door, all the guarded public entrances people make a rush for being only the "way out," and a pin would not be allowed to pass in. There is no genial, law-breaking Irishman there to inform the damp and tired public "that they may go in by the way they go out."

We listened to a fine Chinese band. After a time we thought there was not enough variety about the music; later on we were sure of it, and came away. We put a penny into a huge organ, and it gave us so many opera airs that we had to leave that playing also, and sacrifice a halfpennyworth of melody.

There was a lovely sunset, and a general clear up when all was over; but the buildings appeared too white and cardboardy, and the acres and acres of damp, empty chairs and tables were depressing. After drying and resting a bit at the hotel, as it no longer rained, we sallied out to dine in the street. The amazed waiter, having vainly endeavoured to take us upstairs, saw us politely to a table on the damp pavement. He provided us with an excellent dinner of few dishes, but each a well-cooked work of art. We had grown tired of ship's food, the flavour of everything kept in

ice having faithfully departed. Out-at-elbow Marseilles hovered round us; they seemed to have heard that millionaire lunatics were at large. One man wanted us to buy a gold watch apiece.

Late after dinner, having spent our remaining French coins on odds and ends, we returned to the steamer, damp but happy after the variety of a day on shore. Next morning the *Mooltan* steamed away for home, "Notre Dame de la Garde" watching us from the hill.

The rocks of Marseilles strike one as silver in the sunlight, and they were lovely rising into a blue sky from a still bluer sea. Most of the children felt the cold bitterly: parents seemed to have provided but little warm clothing for them. The Lascars were no longer picturesque in blue linen, red sashes, and turbans; the waiters, too, had left off their white suits and taken to dark serge.

It was rough in the Gulf of Lyons, but the weather cleared as we entered "Gib" and anchored out by that island rock. An early breakfast was provided, a tug coming out to take us ashore, the charge being a shilling each way. A few of us landed, and I took a nice little boy with me. His mother was delighted at his coming; she feared he might fall down the hold

after the hatches had been taken off to get at the luggage.

The tug landed us on a pier, where we secured a sweet little carriage by the hour. Our vehicle was shaped like a miniature landau, having a fixed roof on poles, and a quantity of leather curtains to draw if more shelter was required. We descended to investigate the market. European produce was sold on one side. I saw some fine vegetables and fruit; also all kinds of charming baskets, some made of stiff grass, and costing only a few pence, but rather useless. Natives of Morocco had possession of the other half of the Market Square, and a most delightful assortment of Eastern rubbish appeared on view, but we had no time to linger and buy. We passed through a quaint, narrow, guarded gateway, always closed at night, and not even opened to the Governor's wife, should she happen to arrive late without a pass.

The streets of Gibraltar were a narrow, artistic jumble of huge mules, Spaniards, Europeans, and Arabs from over-the-way Africa. The Rock is almost hollow, having been excavated for shooting-galleries, from which guarding artillery is fired; there are also huge reservoirs to store water which dribbles down the cliff.

We drove through another great gateway, entering a garden on our way to Europa Point. The hardy little horse could barely draw the carriage up the hills, and was only just able to prevent it from rolling down anyhow.

"Gib's" Hyde Park is laid out in zigzag terraces. Huge old stunted pines grow amongst the beautiful flowers, for the flowers in Gibraltar are beautiful, and wherever there is a crevice or a bit of earth, a plant will grow and bloom. Bright geraniums, cactus, heliotrope, and bougainvillier cover the many walls as ivy might at home. Children in the street run after you with small roses of all colours, and having the sweetest scent in the world. There is a dry dock at "Gib" now, where ships of war can be repaired; but this is a present-day bit of work. People who are in a hurry can get into a basket on the top of the Rock, and slide down a rope into the valley town below. It is not a trip I should care to take.

Having dismissed the carriage, we enjoyed a little walking and shopping. It was necessary to pass along the narrow pavement one by one, thus making it almost impossible to keep hold of the little boy who accompanied me, and tall mules, or loaded donkeys were con-

tinually walking over him, but he did not appear to mind, though we were terrified. Algeciras is quite near this, in Spain. They say it possesses "the most comfortable hotel in the world." I hope some day in my old age to go there and sample that establishment.

At about twelve o'clock (noon) we passed through the Straits of Gibraltar. I never realised before how narrow they were. The children gave tea-parties to each other all the afternoon. Terrible sticky feasts of toffee, chocolate, strawberries, and oranges. A grown-up had to be in attendance to heighten the deception, and preserve the veneer of childish politeness, otherwise there would have been many a warlike break-up. It was a terribly sticky afternoon altogether, for everywhere was mislaid a bit of toffee or a squashed strawberry.

Off the coast of Spain the ship rolled a little, and many people brought smelling-salts with them to dinner. As we were entering the Bay of Biscay the wind changed, and the steamer pitched herself over the seas like a horse taking regulation fences at a show, and every now and then the jump was an extra high one. Walking was a tiring feat, for as the steamer's bows rose to a wave you seemed to be laboriously plodding up-hill, and then, as the fore part of the vessel dropped into

the trough of the sea, you tore along the deck at a run as though coming down a mountain side. The stewardesses were dying with fatigue, as nearly every one was—well—invisible. The cold on deck could not be faced, while every movement required a few hours' rest to recover from the effects. I got through the time something like this: Bath, bed, slight breakfast, bed; luncheon, bed, a very slight dinner, and then bed for good and all. At length the struggle was over; at five o'clock we passed Ushant Light, and were running up Channel in the morning.

The children looked terribly washed out, and had fearful tales to tell. "They had eaten no meals," and some of them had not even been able for biscuits.

The little ones were much interested in the Eddystone Lighthouse, their first sight of England. They wanted to know: Which was the men's sitting-room? Where did they sleep? How they entered the building? and if they liked living there?

Plymouth was looking lovely, the sun shone, and the day was warm enough. I said good-bye to the captain twice, I met him so often while waiting about watching the luggage carefully lifted on board the tug by Lascars. One lady had sent off her straw

chair, the frilly cushion lying in it loose. At all the other ports a crane raises the luggage and drops it into barges; this takes less time.

People seemed to have all kinds of queer little odds and ends—pets, plants, and curiosities. The custom-house has a very scientific way of clearing through luggage. Everything is stored alphabetically. Thus if your name is Brown, a porter at once leads the way to compartment B, where your things are sure to arrive.

We rattled along in the boat-train, with plenty of meals and no railway accident. Having travelled all night through snow showers, I caught the Holyhead express at Crewe, having had a few changes.

On the 28th of April, at 5.30 A.M., I found myself on Kingstown Pier, in a bitter east wind—at home.

THE END

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